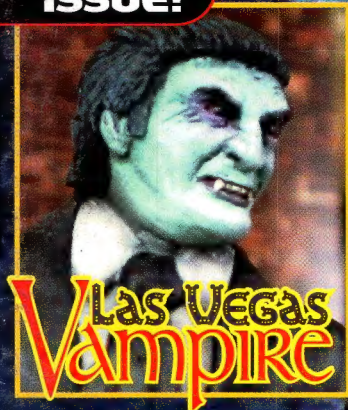


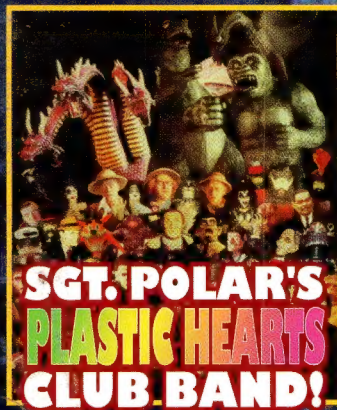
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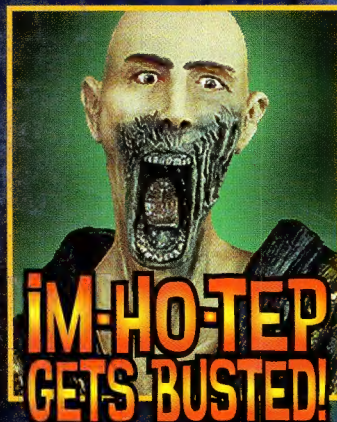
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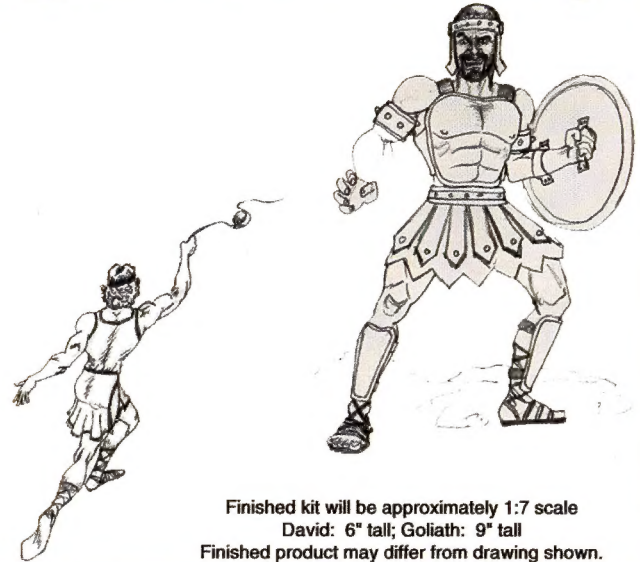
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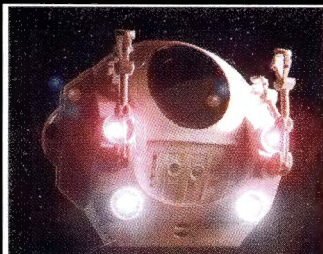
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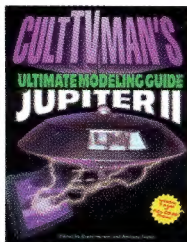
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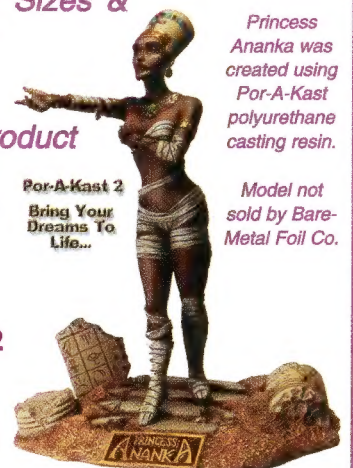
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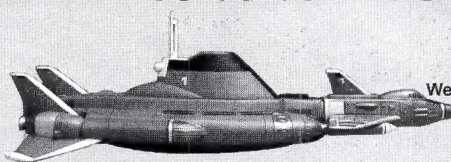


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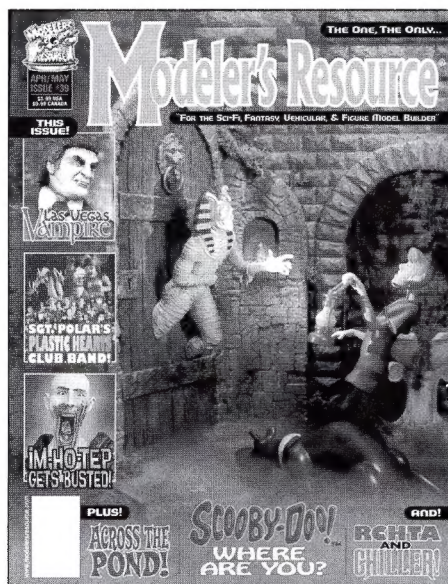
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Our Magazine: Striving to provide you, the hobbyist, with a promptly published, bimonthly magazine that presents the most up-to-date and useful information for your modeling needs.

Our Customer Service: Continuing to offer prompt, personalized attention to our readers, retailers and advertisers.

Our Products: Providing high quality and affordably priced items.



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CONT

Scooby Doo!

Fred DeRuvo takes two Scooby and Shaggy action figures and creates a scene that easily could have appeared in any of the cartoon episodes! Find out all the details, starting on page 28.

Kits pictured built/painted by: Bill Craft (Vampire), Jim Bertges (Beatles), The Morgans (Im-Ho-Tep Bust).

Main cover photo: Dave Bengel
Diorama build-up by Fred DeRuvo (Scooby-Doo!),
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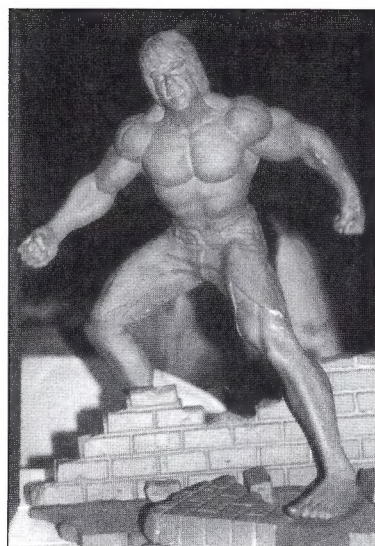
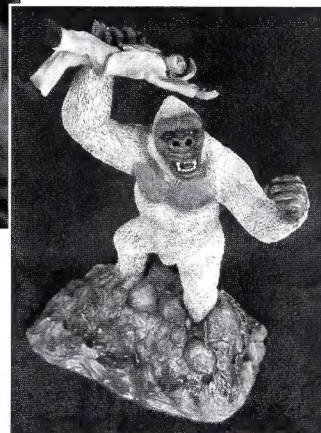
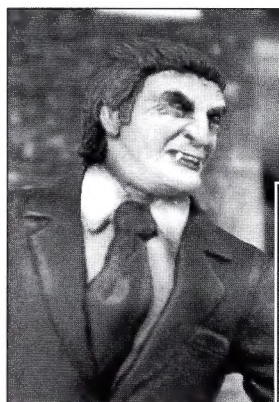
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From the Craftbeast

Bill takes on the Nightstalker!

Plus, Bill goes back in time and highlights Son of Kong in his Beastly Behemoths column!



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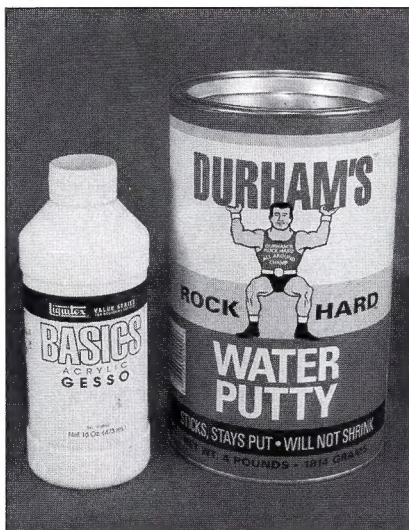
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Down the Prehistoric Trail

Ah, the Memories...

A

s I write this article, it's tax time and that's usually cause for consternation, only because I wind up going over our receipts for the year and gathering everything together for our accountant so that she can let me know exactly how much more money I will have to pay the IRS. (Strikes a familiar chord in all of us, doesn't it?)

Now, I'm really not complaining because if you look around, it's not hard to uncover company after company that has either gone out of business or is on the way there. I'm not talking just about hobby-related businesses either. A few years ago, "dot com" businesses began to pop up all over the Internet. They came out of nowhere with their investors in tow and sky-rocketed to the top. Many of these same companies have just as quickly dropped back to earth with a resounding "thud." Investors are out their "investment" and employees are sent packing, hoping to find work elsewhere.

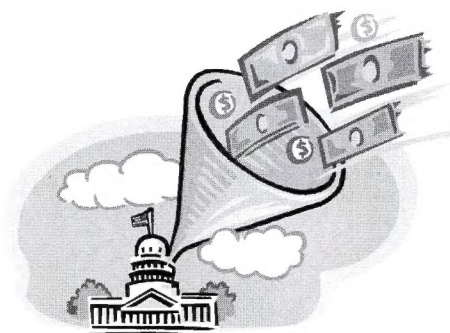
Not long ago, I read that Rosie O'Donnell had garnered the necessary "backers" to start up a magazine that had long since gone the way of the dinosaur. Apparently, she had loved that particular magazine and was very excited about the prospect of starting it up again.

Her excitement brought back memories to us of our own beginnings in the publishing business. However, when Silvia and I began *Modeler's Resource*® in January of 1994 (the first issue was published in March '94), there were no outside investors; everything we did for MR was done with our own personal capital, sweat and tears, but it was also a labor of love for an industry holding great memories of childhood!

I remember our first issue, published as a 12 page, xeroxed newsletter! That first issue was essentially given away, as was most of the second; all 250 copies of each issue. It wasn't until the third issue that we finally had subscribers. With Issue #6, we converted to a magazine-type format and then with Issue #9, we added a four-color cover and by Issue #10, we began adding full color pages. From there, we kept adding more pages and more color and then eventually switched over to a bimonthly publishing schedule and have never looked back.

It's a nice feeling to be able to say that *Modeler's Resource* continues to do well. So well, in fact, that a few years ago we were able to drastically reduce our subscription rates and actually provide you, the customer, with a decent savings off the purchase price. We were pleased to do this in spite of the fact that our printing costs as well as postage rates routinely rises. Nearly every magazine I know of offers some type of discount or incentive for subscribing and we wanted to be able to do that as well. So, as soon as our numbers got to a pivotal point, we were happy to pass the savings onto you.

I remember the first ten issues of the magazine and how I scrambled to get articles.



I also remember one of my first encounters with Bill Craft. While we were talking, the subject came up of how great it would be to have him put together one of our covers. Well, Issue #13 was Bill's first cover and the difference in that issue compared to each issue before it was remarkable. Shortly after that, Bill began writing on a regular basis for the magazine and we are proud of to have him "on board."

Jim Bertges began writing for us as well and his expertise is immeasurable. It is great to be able to read Jim's articles and appreciate what he brings to the modeling table with each issue.

There have been others, most notably Mike & Cindy Morgan who, as a husband and wife team, offer a real unique perspective for the hobbyist within the pages of MR.

It's nice to reminisce. At times though, I have to shake my head in wonder because without these folks and others like Jerry Buchanan, Steve Goodrich, Andrew Hall, Joe Graziano, and most importantly, you, the reader, where would this magazine be? It's safe to say that we would be nowhere close to where we are now, if existing at all. *Modeler's Resource* seems to have struck a chord with thousands of people worldwide, and we are grateful for the support that all of you have shown for this magazine, many of you since its inception. At least twice yearly we make decisions on what should stay in the magazine, what should go and what should be revamped. As the hobby changes, we endeavor to meet the challenges head-on. Many of your comments help us in that decision-making process.

And as we grow, we can also be assured of one other thing...the IRS will get more! But, if that's the "downside" of growth and success, so be it. As long as we please the majority of our readers, MR has absolutely no plans of slowing down or going away. The more we have to pay in taxes, the more it means that *Modeler's Resource* is filling its role in the modeling world and pleasing our customers with the articles and products they want. So, be of good cheer and enjoy this issue with all of the model-related material inside. We'll see you next time, promptly, the first week of May.

Fred

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"Hard to Be a Modeler"

Dear Editor:

Just a few random thoughts... I think MR needs a Modeler's "Want Section" in your magazine! My Wants? Hey, Polar Lights/Aurora (whoever you are), how about reissuing the Dr. Jekyll kit, in a 3-in-1 format? Basic kit, but how about one with clear plastic parts so you could make an Invisible Man (hands and head parts) and the third have parts that you could make into the Fly (original). All three wore the same clothing! How about the Spaceman from Earth vs The Flying Saucers, with optional metal or alien head? How about Gort with Klattu or the Woman in his arms, with a working visor that we could light up? How about a crew for the Jupiter 2 kit? Or some more figures in 1/8 scale to go with the Smith kit? Crew and The Keeper (Michael Renni), the Gunfighter from Westworld with optional head?

Convention organizers or visitors: how about videos of the event for sale? Four to five photos in a magazine don't do it for me! We have no hobby shops in Detroit. The only modeling of others is what I see in a magazine. So, videos of the big shows would be nice to see! I already played Model Mania and Horizon's videos. I want more!

You can get almost anything on a rubber stamp. Why not characters from our hobby, like a Robby, Gort, Alien, Terminator, etc.? Stamps would add a little zip to our mailings! Seems we could also use T-shirts so we can find others of our kind while walking in the malls.

Airbrushes: I had a top-of-the-line type which required more cleaning and part replacement than use. Once I saw the Testors' Aztek in action; I traded mine away and got one! Just keep the nozzle clean (carburetor cleaner sprayed through it works great - outside!). I have not had to replace any parts on it for over four years already!

FineScale Modeler is bragging about preassembled and painted models. How can it be a model when it is already made! Your magazine had the Road Warrior on the cover. In visiting a toy store, I saw the same figures, plus Snake Plisken being sold already made for \$15.00. Now what does the resin kit cost? Again, various prices from the

hobby dealer you buy it from and it sure ain't \$15.00 for a ready made figure!

Complaint of the month: A certain California-based hobby shop whom I dealt with for 10 years recently took a phone order from me. All the stuff was in stock and my credit card cleared. After two weeks, I called to see what happened. Seemed a few people ordered the same items on-line after me and "on-line customers get served first" so after 10 years, my patronage means nothing as I don't have (or want) a computer?! Shame!

Model Grafix was mentioned in a recent MR as it had Mak 3000 Sf3D in it. After calling 20 hobby shops nationwide, few of them heard of it or only carried their WWII books and magazines! I found one shop who could order it, but I'd have to buy at least 30 issues! Hard to be a modeler!

Edward John Wojcik
Detroit, MI

- Wow, Ed, it doesn't sound like you're having too much fun! I'm sorry. Some of the ideas you present are good ones and worthy of attention. I'm certain that the folks at Polar Lights will look at your suggestions seriously. Whether or not they'll ultimately bring any of your ideas to the store shelves is another thing because of all that goes into their decision-making process.

Videos? We've highlighted a company called Toymasters Video Magazine twice now. Have you had opportunity to get in contact with them? While they don't do every show, there are a number that they do video tape. Here's their address again: Toymasters Video Magazine, 170 S Portland Ave, Apt 3C, Brooklyn NY 11217.

The best place to track down Model Grafix is in a comic book store and I should have pointed that out when I reviewed that particular issue. I also recently saw one at my local Tower Books & Records store.

Hopefully, 2001 will prove to be better for modelers, but I really think the key, as I said in Issue #38's "From the Publisher," is becoming adaptable to the ebb and flow of the market. Thanks for writing, Ed.

"Not A Complaint & Request"

Dear Fred,

Just a note for your quality

control (not a complaint). On page five the letters section has a typo. The continuation note says to see page 62. The letters are continued on page 60. I usually read them straight through and was lost for a minute.

Here's the complaint: I think Bill Craft's talents are wasted on DVD reviews. He is a master modeler and I look forward to his "how to" articles every month. I would hate to see him burdened with stuff like the DVD reviews to the point where he did not have time for the modeling articles.

Request: Bill Craft's rendering of Sister Mira was great. Please have him do a "how to" on his painting technique for Hispanic skin tones and leather for this piece.

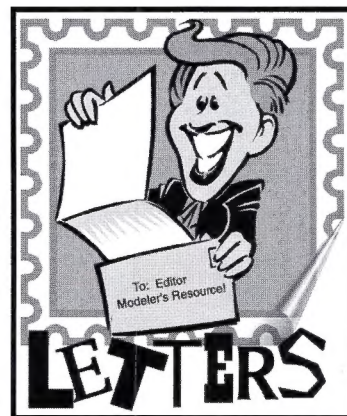
Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Frank Aschmann (E-mail)

- Thanks very much for writing and for pointing out the error. Actually, there were a number of them, which we failed to catch due to last minute changes in pagination just prior to going to print. We're working with an outside agency that is helping us eliminate those errors.

The "Sights & Sounds of Modeling" column was actually Bill's idea which he broached to me last year. After discussing that and his other new one, (Beastly Behemoths), we decided to go ahead and let Bill go for both of these. However, "Sights & Sounds" may not become as regularly occurring as his other columns. It requires much less time for Bill to put that one together than the others since, generally speaking, there is nothing Bill has to build-up for the "Sights & Sounds." I've given the go ahead to Bill to do "Sights & Sounds" for as long as he would like to do it. He still wants to do his regular column "From the Lair of the Craftbeast" as well as the "Beastly Behemoths" and those will most likely take priority over the "Sights & Sounds"

Thanks for your compliment and suggestion on the Sister Mira build-up! As Editor, I am always impressed with Bill's build-up quality and, like you, I think his Hispanic skin tone for this particular kit would be great as an article all by itself. If it's okay with Bill, we'll put that idea on his list of "To Dos" for an upcoming issue. Thanks again for writing, Frank.



"Short of a Square Deal"

Hi Modeler's Resource:

I am a collector of horror films and I've been collecting models. Recently, it's been a rough way to go. I run into a lot of smart mouth attitudes! On top of that, the deals are Mickey Mouse, the instructions are missing, or the box. There is always something short of a square deal.

I know other people interested in collecting. I tell them to steer clear. It's small and cliquish and it doesn't matter how much money you spend either, you never get polite service.

Sincerely, Barry Duff (E-mail)

"An Open Letter to Modelers"

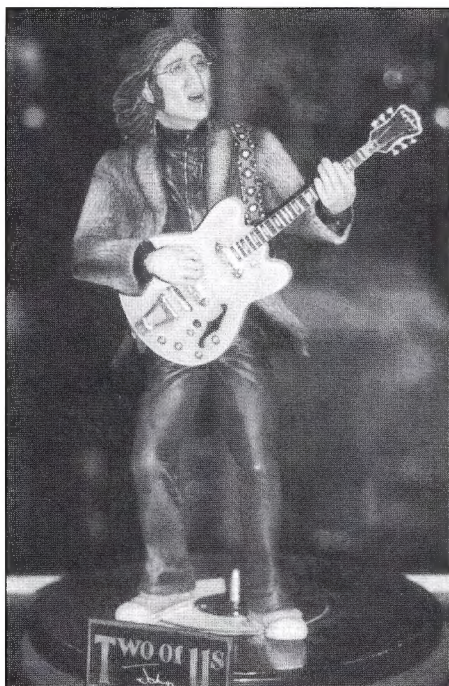
Greetings.

This is an open letter to the modeling community. Most of you are aware of the annual San Diego Comicon and I am sure many of you attend every year. In addition to comics, they also put on a wonderful art show. Included in the art show is dimensional art, oftentimes represented by interesting models and dioramas.

In what may be the industry's best kept secret, for the past three years, a \$500 cash prize has been awarded to the "Best of the Show" in dimensional art. The reason I know this is because I am one of the judges. So, if you are planning on attending this summer's SD Comicon, July 19-22, 2001, then bring your model(s) with you. Someone is going to go home with \$500 (cash) for the best dimensional art, so it might as well be you.

(Shameless plug: Look for my book, *The Biology of Science Fiction Cinema*, coming this Spring from McFarland. Better yet, buy a copy.)

Sincerely,
Mark C Glassy, Ph.D.
(aka, Dr. Mark) via E-mail



John Lennon kit from Posthumous Productions.



Gladiator from Needful Things



CHILLER THEATRE: 10th Anniversary Show!

by Ed "The Diceman" Bowkley

October 27-28-29, 2000; three days that will live in infamy. Why, you may ask? It's just your ordinary three-day party at the **Chiller Theatre Toy, Model and Film Expo**, Chock full of model kits, celebrities, toys, movies, magazines and posters right? Ya couldn't be more wrong! This past show was the 10th Anniversary of Chiller, and to say that the fans came out in droves would be a gross understatement! Nearly 15,000 fans from all over the globe invaded the Garden State to partake in the festivities and celebrate this landmark event. And what a party it was!

For the past 10 years, twice a year mind you, Chiller Poobah Kevin Clement and staff have brought together the most diverse assortment of genre fans and celebrities the world has ever seen all under one roof! With 76 celebrities ranging from Oscar Award winner Patricia Neal to Linda Lovelace, six bands jamming until the wee hours of the morning which included the likes of Zacherley the Cool Ghoul, Dino Artist, William Stout and former Runaways lead singer Cherie Currie jamming with Dead Elvi, Star Studded panels, movie screenings...and all this was during the three days, NOT the history of the show! Ya see, the Chiller Theatre Expo was actually created so fans of model kits, the old timers of today's version of the hobby, could all meet each other face to face and score some great kits in the process. Sadly, a good portion of those "Godfathers of Garage Kits" are no longer around, even with the hobby in a state of flux right now, rest assured the hobby is STILL alive and well!

With well over 100 tables of model kit-related merchandise to be had among the 320 plus dealers tables the show boasts, here we have a few of the standouts that have made their way into my greedy paws...or onto my "must have" list. First off, being the Creature from the Black Lagoon fanatic that I am, there was no way I was leaving the show without the HUGE 1:1 scale Creature bust that Robert Ortiz sculpted for Needful Things. Robb Rotondi and David Grant, of Needful Things, never fail to impress with their larger scale kits, like the new Pumpkinhead, Gladiator, or the DeNiro and Joe Pesci Busts from Goodfellas but that Creech bust...well it's in my dungeon primed and ready to be painted! Also debuting at the show was what many people have started calling the "definitive" Mighty Joe Young kit. Brilliantly sculpted by Jeff "Silverback" Taylor and available through his Taylor Designs company...well take a look at the picture cause it's too cool for words! This year Beatles fans aren't only rejoicing over the release of the new CD "One," but for Posthumous Productions' new John Lennon kit. Now I gotta admit that I'm not a big fan of Rock n Roll kits per se, but this is one sweet kit! Sculpted by David Grant, the kit depicts John as he appeared in the "Let it Be" film atop the Apple Building...nice! Village Comics had at least 2 new kits that stuck in my mind and both were 1/6 scale and done by an unknown UK Sculptor; Alex from Clockwork Orange and Russell Crowe from the movie Gladiator. Sadly, the build-ups were sold by the time I got back to their table with my camera. Jayco Hobbies is still alive and premiered their new Hulk kit sculpted by that talented duo, Joy and Tom Studios. Yours truly, Diceman Creations, had two new kits sculpted by the ever popular Ed White, namely the new Savage Barbarian and Deluxe version Im Ho Tep. There is also a regular version of the Im Ho Tep sold now to assist those who are running out of room to display all their kits. Relative newcomers, Vampir Unlimited, had a kick-butt Peter Cushing kit, and on the replacement part front, Cult of Personality had a new head and hand for the Polar Lights reissue Godzilla that you might like to pick up. Even Chiller Theatre got into the resin mix by having their brand new Zacherley Tribute kit for sale this show! Sculpted by Ed White with castings by Ed Bowkley (shameless plug), this is a fully licensed kit of the Cool Ghoul that ya know ya gotta have! Speaking of in-progress sculpts (nice segue eh?), Alternative Images was displaying a new King Kong Sculpture done by Rob Van Tine; Wayne the Dane had a pretty neat Kirk Douglas as he appeared in Spartacus on his table; John Guenther of Pinkerton FX had a VERY weird, yet very cool critter on display; and Needful Things has a new Abbott and Costello piece due that's sure to blow you away! A few other notable kits that I wasn't able to get pics of, but bear men-

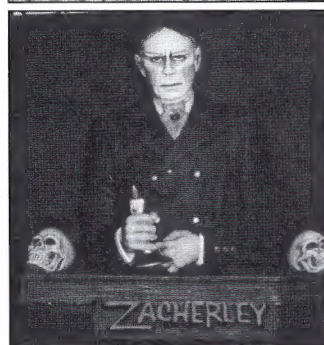
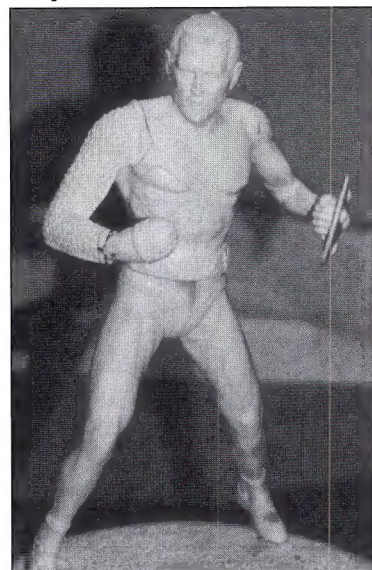
tioning are; Fantasy Creations' Lady Z kit sculpted by Chuck Needham; Night Gallery's Reptilicus; Dimensional Designs Village of the Damned; Shawn Nagle's phenomenal Pit Fighter; and last but not least, Mike Parks had some new busts at the show based on the artwork of Frank Dietz. Now I'm sure there were a bunch of other cool kits that should be mentioned, but I'm old and the memory isn't as great as it used to be.

Some other related show news is that the Model and Art contest continues to draw raves from the fans and they even added a few new sponsors to that already impressive lineup. Playing Mantis/Polar Lights and Fatman Productions are now sponsoring the Youth/Novice category. The Compleat Sculptor is sponsoring the ScratchBuilt category and Chiller Theatre Magazine cover artist Jeff Pitarelli now sponsors the Art Contest. To dispel the rumors that were floating around the show, there WILL be a Model and Art contest at next April's show and not only that...BUT starting next spring, Chiller will start having Modeling Seminars on Saturday and Sunday of the show AND there's no extra fee to attend them! So far, noted Sculptor David Grant, Award Winning build up artist Jimmy Demming, The Compleat Sculptor and Smooth-On Inc. have generously donated their time to this new endeavor with more, to be announced! And YES the show WILL be at the Meadowlands' Sheraton Hotel.

So, as you can see, the Chiller Theatre Toy, Model and Film Expo is taking no prisoners in the 21st Century! So get yer taxes taken care of a little earlier and schedule Chiller into your agenda. Remember it's not just a convention...It's a way of life!



Im-Ho-Tep (above) and The Savage, both from Diceman Creations. Below: In progress Spartacus from Wayne the Dane.



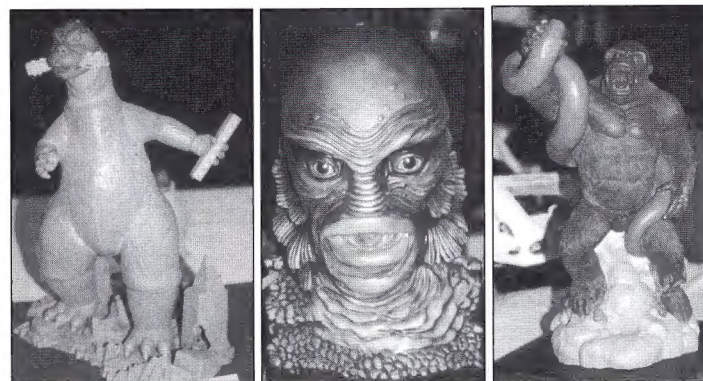
Above: Licensed Zacherley the Cool Choul kit from Chiller Theatre.



Above: Siouxsie from Sassy's Satellite's table



Above: Ed Bowkley (left) with Vincent Pastore of the Sopranos, and Ed's wife, Sue.



Left: Godzilla replacement heads from Cult of Personality. Middle: 1:1 scale creature from Needful Things. Right: Kong from Alternative Images.



Jeff Taylor and his new Mighty Joe Young

FACT FILE



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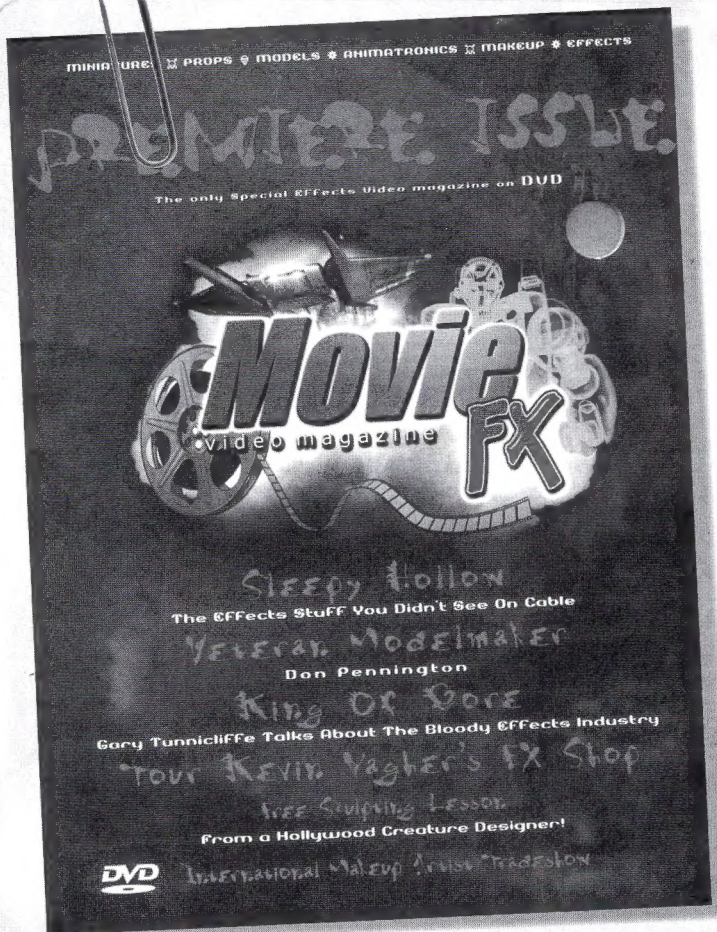
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Vol. 1 No. 1

Can't get enough special effects in your modeling diet? If you're like me, then the answer is a resounding "NO!"

This DVD magazine, aptly titled, "Movie FX," was briefly highlighted in the "Coming at You!" section of issue #37 and we thought we'd expand on it for you this issue.

Producer, Gary Barth, has put together a top-notch, behind-the-scenes DVD that will make you feel as though you are right in where the action is taking place. This is really the next best thing to actually going behind-the-scenes and seeing how it's done. The benefit to having this on DVD is, of course, that you can watch it over and over again.

Some of the highlights of the DVD include some of the effects utilized on Tim Burton's *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, as well as talks with such veterans as Don Pennington, gore expert, Gary Tunncliffe, whose effects on the *Hellraiser* franchise are standouts. Beyond this, sculptor and creature designer, Jordu Schell, takes you through the process of sculpting a maquette.

You will definitely need a DVD player to watch and enjoy this magazine. Of course, if your TV/DVD player and/or DVD computer is setup near your modeling area, then you're one step ahead of the rest of us.

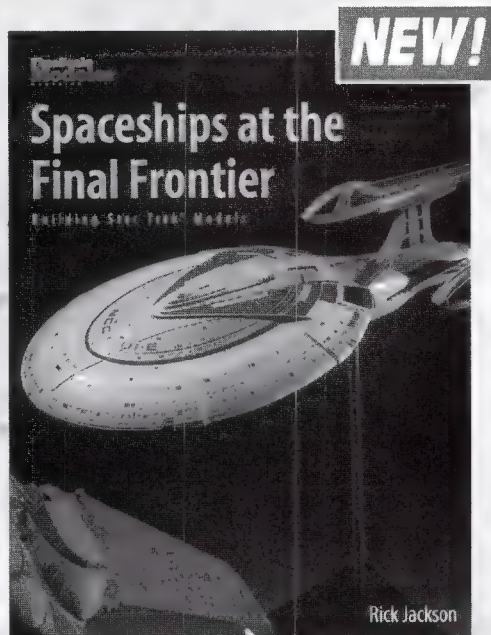
Watching this video magazine certainly reminds me of why I enjoy modeling so much, since modeling is so tied into the effects industry and, for the most part, always has been. The quality is superb, as is the sound.

This particular issue (Vol 1, No 1) is the premiere issue and, besides what's already been mentioned, it includes a tour of Kevin Yagher's FX shop and coverage of the International Make-up Artist Tradeshow.

There is enough here to increase your appetite for more and, hopefully, that's what we'll come to have from these folks.

For more information on subscribing to Movie FX Video Magazine, contact them at the address shown above.





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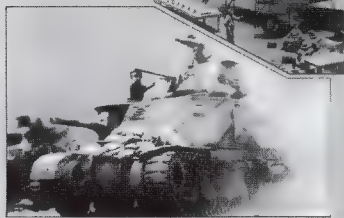
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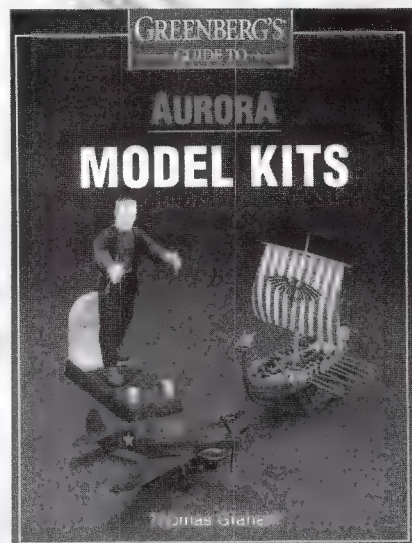
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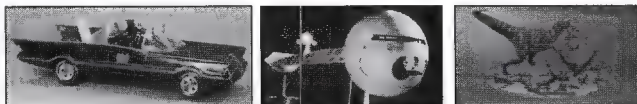
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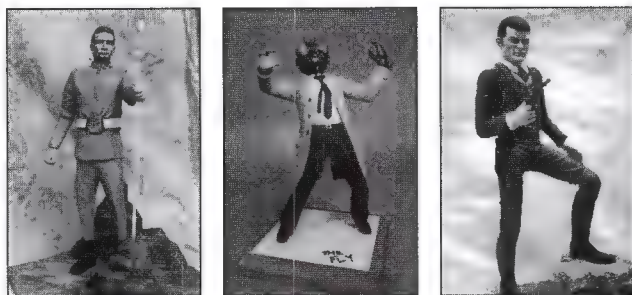
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**FROM
THE
LAIR
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With
Bill Craft

MAXIMUS



Turn back in time now to the glory days of the ancient Roman Empire and let's have a look at one of it's heroes. Maximus, the once heralded general of the Roman army, now denounced and thrown into the gladiatorial ring where he is forced to fight to the death against his fellow gladiators. He fought with a vengeance and gained back the respect of his people.

"Gladiator" was an excellent period film directed by Ridley Scott and starring Russell Crowe as the gladiator, Maximus. But, we are not here to discuss the film, are we?

Presented to you now is an outstanding kit from the folks at Jay Dee in the United Kingdom. The likeness is astounding. The attention to detail is superb.

This is a tan-colored cold-cast kit that comes in 12 parts. Also included with the kit is a stretch of vinyl, used for the straps, cloth for the exposed upper tunic and an odd piece of cloth with a resin stud design on one side.

I had originally intended this piece to be a part of my multi-kit review article I did a couple of issues ago, but I knew this kit would take a bit more time to present properly to the modeling world.

I INTERRUPT THIS BUILDING AND RENDERING ARTICLE TO OFFER YOU GUYS AND GALS SOME REALLY COOL NEWS.

Over the years a lot of you folks have asked me where you could obtain the antiquing stains I use on my kits. I have directed most of you to hobby shops in my area for this. Well, it seems that the wonderful powers that be at Bon Artiste have discontinued the oil base stains in favor of the water based type. The water based antiquing stains are vastly inferior and a waste of time to use. That's my story and i'm stickin' to it.



Upon discovering this dreadful news, especially since I use this stuff on all my kits, I needed an alternative or a substitute. I am not a chemical genius, but I knew there had to be a way of making this stuff. To my surprise and undying gratitude, I found out through the ol' grapevine that none other than former MRer and model man Maximus Extremis, Sir Tom Gilliland, had already figured it out. Ah-so! I quickly ran out to my local paint store and got the ingredients needed to create my own antiquing stain.

The two main ingredients are, a transparant color-blending agent and a color tint. I can only assume that the name brands I have used have counterparts on the store shelves, so bear with me on this. The brand I got for the blending agent was by "McCloskey" and the material is called Glaze Coat. Upon opening the 31 ounce can of Glaze Coat, I mixed the contents to an even mixture since the main base of the material had settled to the bottom of the can. The second ingredient was a one and one half ounce tube of "Lamp Black" color tint from "Tints All." Since Black is the most popular color I use in my applications, I thought this was a good start for my experiment. I squeezed out the contents of the tube into the can and began to mix the two components together. Mix until the material is a consistent color. The mixture of the 31 ounce can and the one and one half ounce of tint seem to be the right balance. That's all there is to it.

The 31 ounce can of Glaze Coat was about \$12 bucks and the tube of Tints All was around two bucks.

Upon applying the first bit of the mixture to my Maximus kit, I noticed first that the material went on very smooth. Apply the mixture in sections and wipe off against the grain. So far so good. I love how it goes on and it doesn't seem to dry as fast as Bon Artiste, so this is good. It gives the modeler a bit more time to work with it. Since you are dealing with a larger container, rather than the smaller jars, it is a good idea to mix the material often so that the base of the mixture does not settle back to the bottom of the can.

Later, I will experiment with different colors and I'll let you know how it goes. There are a wide range of color



tint additives. Now everybody can make their own antiquing stain and you're not at the mercy of hobby shops or Bon Artiste. I am very happy about this and I wish to thank Tom Gilliland once again, for passing it along to me. It's funny when I think about it. I turned Tom on to the antiquing stains years ago and now he's turning me on to this stuff. Oh the tangled webs of the modeler.

The problem now is, what do I call this stuff? Acme TGX? I dunno.

Now back to my regularly scheduled article in progress. Just kidding.

I had already purchased a great "making-of" book on "Gladiator," which was full of color photos of Maximus, that I could use for my color schemes.

I decided to attack the skin tones first. I actually got this right on the first try. I mixed transparent Red Oxide and a little opaque white to lighten the red and airbrushed my color on. Then I mixed in a bit of transparent red and airbrushed the color into some of the recesses of the flesh. The final step involved a slight misting of white over the skin tones.

The tunic on the main body was the area that I addressed next. Following the photos in my book, I first airbrushed on a transparent blue over the antiquing stain. Since there is a wealth of raised texture on the tunic, I drybrushed Ceramcoat's Cape Cod over the blue. A misting of white was then applied to soften the colors.

The armor was the next area I concentrated on. I misted black on the pieces first and followed that up with a transparent blue. A misting of white gave me a used armor look. You can't have new shining armor on a gladiator. For the raised ornaments on the armor, I used Testors® Chrome Silver, which after applying, I went over with a transparent Shading Grey to knock down the highlights.

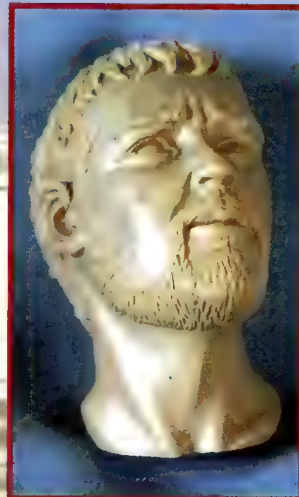
The shield has marvelous ornaments on it. From the reference pictures in my book, they are right on the money. The shield was rendered with black on the inner circle and chrome silver for the outer and inner rings. The accents on the shield were hand rendered with chrome silver. The shield was then fogged with transparent shading grey to give it a used look. The antiquing stain accented the dents and sword strike marks well.

The boots have awesome detail in them as well. For this, I applied the antiquing stain first and then went in with transparent Raw Umber. A dry-brushing heaven awaited me as I applied white to the boots and finished up with an application of trans-



All the parts are laid out, inspected, cleaned and readied for assembly

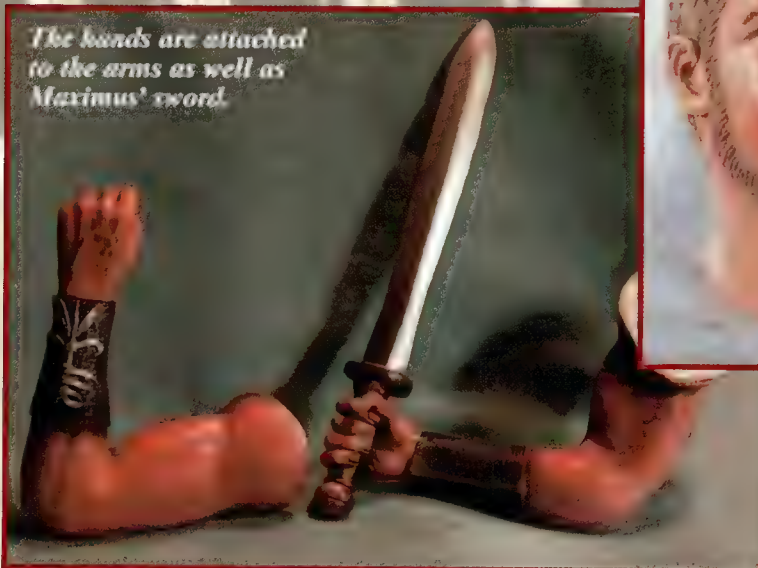
The first three stages of the head rendering.



The flesh color on all exposed skin areas are complete



The hands are attached to the arms as well as Maximus' sword.





Gladiatorial footwear.



Shoulder armor.



*Completed
Body
armor
and
tunic.*



The wonderfully detailed shield.



My bible for this project. "Gladiator, The making of the Ridley Scott epic," from Newmarket Press.



The cloth that came with the kit was cut into two small strips that I then applied with glue to the area between the top upper arm and the shoulder sections of the armor. The cloth was airbrushed with shading grey and misted with white to match it's resin counterpart below the body armor.

The included vinyl strip was cut into sections and used to give the appearance that it was holding the shoulder armor in place and also as a grip for the shield. The straps were dry-brushed with Paynes Grey to bring out some of the detail.

Included in the kit was a piece of resin with cloth on one side for the studded straps that ornamented the armor. This piece was very brittle and, in my opinion, the only flaw with the kit. Great care had to be observed when cutting them from the main sheet. I had thought about making my own with cloth and metal studs, but I thought I would be true to the kit and use the supplied pieces. The studs were rendered with chrome silver and fogged with transparent Shading Grey.

The last bit of detail I did on the kit was to add a bit of splattered blood. I was in a quandary whether or not I really wanted to do this. The kit looked great without the splatters, but I decided to add just a touch of blood anyway, to get the feeling of the kit in all it's glory. I mixed up a batch of blood color by using red with a touch of black. I applied this to an old toothbrush and splattered it on selected areas. I believe the effect worked out very well. Not too much blood. Just enough.

The base was the final piece to be rendered. An application of the antiquing stain, followed by a transparent yellow and a misting of white finished off the dirt area. Paynes Grey was then applied to the base border and a metallic rub-on was added as an accent.

As much as I love kits based on monsters and men in rubber suits, this is a great addition to any modeler's collection.

So, fare thee well Modelheadis Buildas and remember to play nice out there.

The show is not yet over boys and girls. I will now take you from the ancient world to the more modern, as I present to you another obscure character that has finally been given his due. Read on.

The cloth is cut, glued into position and air-brushed to match the lower tunic section.



The fragile section of material used for the lower armor straps.



The vinyl strip is cut into small strips and glued into position on the arm.

The old "tried and true," tooth-brush method for blood splatters.



Check with your favorite kit dealer concerning this imported model.

Las Vegas Vampire



"You have got to keep telling yourself, 'it couldn't happen here'." Karl Kolchak's words of wisdom in the TV made film, "The Night Stalker." Made in 1972, "The Night Stalker" was the highest rated TV movie of it's day. Spawning a sequel, "The Night Strangler" and a TV series, it forever immortalized Darren McGavin's character, Karl Kolchak, forever in the minds of viewers as the bumbling reporter who always seemed to be the only one in the world who knows that there is an inhuman thing running around, killing people.

His first encounter was the vampire, Janos Schorsney, played magnificently by Barry Atwater. Janos has taken up residence in Las Vegas, where he begins draining some of the local young ladies of their blood. Karl is the only one who believes that there is a vampire running around and realizes that he has to deal with the creature by himself.

Here we have a three-piece resin kit of the "Las Vegas Vampire." This kit was sculpted by the ever-improving Ron Gearing, and produced by Bob Wallets of Wonder Models and Vampir Unlimited's, Count Fritz.

This is a simple kit to build. Just attach the two arms, work in some putty and do a little clean-up on the seams and your done. I found only about four air holes to deal with on this piece.

I wanted my Vampire to have that unearthly look, so I choose to use a pale blue with hints of transparent green in the shadows. A shot of transparent red around the eye sockets worked in very nicely. A misting of opaque white over the transparent colors finished up my pasty-faced friend. The same treatment was applied to the hands.

Our toothy friend is dressed in your basic black suit and tie. A base of black, followed by a generous dry brushing of white and then a transparent shading grey over the two colors, produced just the right kind of detail I wanted in the cloths. A light bit of white speckling on the pants, through the ol' airbrush, finished out his attire. A well-dressed vampire, gets the best looking chicks, I suppose.

My only gripe, If you can call it that, is that I like my figure kits in more pieces. I prefer to have the head and hands separate from the body so I can really render in the details a bit more, without having to wrestle around with the whole kit. Of course, that's just my pet peeve, so don't send me any hate mail or I'll cry.

I naturally applaud model guys who come up with new subjects to produce. Just look around and you'll find a whole hoard of beasties that have not been given their just deserts. Be it a great kit or not, at least it is something NEW!

To get your very own "Las Vegas Vampire," contact: Vampir Unlimited, PO Box 124, EIslip, N.Y. 11730-0124 or give them a call at: 631-956-1313



Questions or comments:

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Legacies II: Scale model town scene built by Bob Letterman called, Twilight of the Third Republic. When Hitler invaded France, the Third Republic ended.

...and the Rest is History!

Bob Letterman & VLS *with Jim Bertges*

How do you go from being a detective for the St. Louis Police Department to being one of the best known importer/distributor/manufacturers of Military and Historical models and accessories in the world? All it takes is \$92.00, a few contacts along the way, a bit of determination and a great love for and knowledge of the hobby. Read on and learn how Bob Letterman went from working high crime areas to providing high quality model kits and accessories to hobbyists around the world.

Bob's earliest experiences with model building go back to his childhood in the years after the Second World War. Like many young modelers, his first exposure involved his father and resulted in some dazzling memories. "In 1945 when my dad came home from the Pacific, he took me to a little hobby shop across the street from where I lived, above my grandmother's restaurant, and we bought some stick and paper airplanes. We took them up to my little room there and built them. Then, we went out on the back porch (looking into the alley) and we'd set them on fire and throw them out. That was my first experience with a model."

In the days before injection molded kits, balsa and paper and other materials did their duty as modeling materials, but with the advent of plastic kits, Bob became a full-fledged model builder. "I did a lot of work with clay when I was really young. I built a lot of things out of clay; ships, cars, even figures. I sculpted a lot of figures when I was a kid. The first thing I remember in plastic was a Mig 15, I don't even know what the brand name was. It was in the late forties and I was seven or eight years old. I went to a com-

petition and, believe it or not, won first place and I was the only kid in the competition. It was a big deal. I was even on television and they interviewed me. We were the only ones in the neighborhood who had a TV, so everybody came from all over to watch it."

As with many modelers, there came a time in Bob's life where other things supplanted his interest in building plastic kits. "I went through airplanes, I built the old Aurora tanks and up until I was about fourteen, I built the AMT cars. Then I discovered women and all that went out the window."

Later, during his stint in the service, Bob's interest was rekindled and from that point it just grew. "When I was in the Army in France, I built some models. I've got a picture of me sitting on my bunk and it's covered with cars and tanks and stuff. When I got out of the Army I got married and after a couple of years I went back to building cars and that evolved into aircraft. Then, about 1965 or 1966, those first, really terrible Tamiya kits came out. When they first came out they were horribly expensive; they were about six dollars and every other model kit was under a dollar. But I had to have them and I built all of them."

Not many years later, the modeling world became aware of Bob's work through the pages of prominent modeling magazines. "In the 70s I built the Winds Of War diorama. It appeared on the cover of FineScale Modeler and in Tamiya magazine. I built it because, in one of those scale-modeling magazines, I read about a diorama and I wanted to try my hand. When I built the Winds Of War it was about four feet by eight feet and I just assumed that's



Left: Close-up of Twilight of the Third Republic. Right: Arrogance. Goering and his generals discuss the imminent battle of Britain.

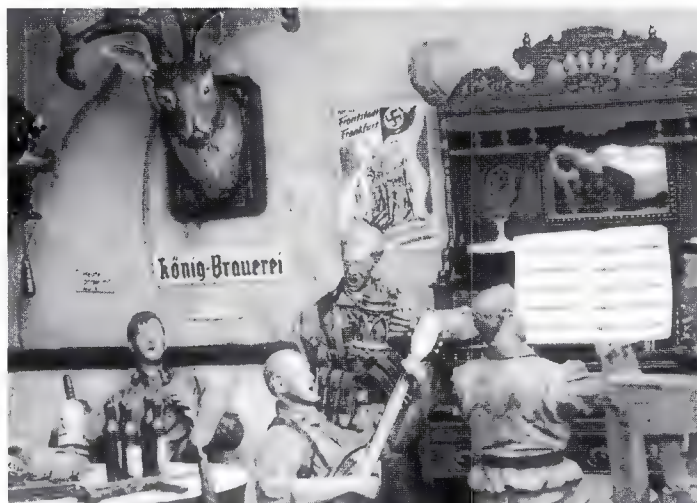
what everybody built. I didn't think that was anything unusual. Then Wes Bradley who worked at a local hobby shop and was later with me for many years said, 'You buy more stuff than anybody I've ever seen. What are you doing?' I told him I was building a diorama and invited him over to see it. He told me I should get involved in IPMS because there was a convention coming up and he said 'You've got to show it to somebody.' Well I did and he did and in '82 it won first place and quite a few other things and well...the rest is history."

While the spotlight of the modeling world was shining on Bob and his accomplishments, for him, it was the beginning of a new path for his life. Aside from being a hobbyist, like everyone else, he had a full time job. Unlike everyone else, his job involved guns and criminals. "Now I'm the first to admit that the quality of Winds of War was terrible, but you've got to remember the time. It was back in the 70s and Shep Paine's book hadn't really gotten out there yet and there weren't any great modelers except Shep. So, considering that I didn't know what drybrushing was or what a wash meant, I was just building this stuff. It wasn't that bad; it had an overall kind of appeal. So all these magazines in the US and Europe and Asia were doing articles on it and the next thing I knew, people would recognize me at shows. At that time, I was a Detective in the St. Louis Police Department. I was 42 or 43 and I worked in one of the highest crime areas in one of the highest crime cities in the country at that time. I had been thinking for a while that I had to get off the street. Law enforcement is a young man's job, chasing people down alleys and across rooftops. I was given a desk job as head of the Special Investigations Unit of the Prosecuting Attorney's office. I felt that if I was going to have a desk job, I might as well be in business for myself because it wasn't fun any more."

His new path led to Europe and modeling competitions there, but more than the competitions it was the modeling industry that caught his attention. "In the meantime I was building a lot of models and my wife Susan and I were traveling in Europe, going to competitions. I did pretty well at the competitions; I'm one of only three Americans who won the gold medal at the Model Engineer Exhibition in Wembley England. There were a lot of articles written about all that stuff, but I noticed as I traveled in Europe all the incredible aftermarket stuff that you just couldn't get in the United States. I realized this was a real niche market. During that time I was going to night school and got my MBA. I specialized in international trade and international finance and so on. I thought I could start a business and start importing all this stuff. My wife asked if it was going to take a lot of money and I said, 'I don't think



Title of above: Upgrade. A joke diorama. CHPS Upgrading to a Lamborghini



so.' In fact, I had just gotten a check for \$92, I don't even remember what it was for; it was just a check we got in the mail. I said, 'I'll take that ninety-two bucks and that's what I'll start the business with.' I got some business cards and I'd made all these contacts in England and began ordering from them and I started War Winds International. Actually the first name was really stupid, it was War Winds Military and Hobby Ltd. What an impressive title, it's funny now that I look back on it. I made up a little catalog and I charged a quarter for it. I started in December of '83. By the next December I was floored that I had sold over three hundred thou-



Above and below: Another close-up view of the Third Republic. Motorcycle escort with Staff car.



Below: Mascarade. Depicts preparation for the Battle of the Bulge. Panther Tanks were being converted to resemble American M10s.



sand dollars worth of merchandise from my basement. That's a lot. It was just me and Susan and an answering machine. We'd come home take down the orders, pull them and pack them and the next morning we'd stop off at UPS and drop them off."

A year later, while he was at the IPMS Nationals as a vendor, Bob met Francios Verlinden. Bob was familiar with Verlinden's

work because they were both featured in articles in *FineScale Modeler* and Verlinden's first book of modeling techniques had just been published. It was an amicable meeting, but nothing came of it. The following week, however, Bob had planned a trip to Europe and he learned that Verlinden's partner, Jos Stok, thought that Warwinds should distribute Verlinden's kits and accessories in the United States. At the time the company that published his books, Bill Dean Books, was importing Verlinden's materials. Verlinden wasn't initially interested in having a company that operated out of a basement handling his line, but he was willing to compromise. He agreed to a trial period of one year to see which company would have better sales and the company that achieved that goal would become Verlinden's exclusive distributor. Within six months Warwinds had doubled Bill Dean's sales and instead of becoming an exclusive distributor, Bob partnered with Verlinden and Stok, forming Verlinden, Letterman and Stok, which was later shortened to VLS.

From that initial investment, Bob had built an international company that provided modelers with models and accessories they'd never dreamed of. And the company is still growing today, "That \$92 is now in the millions and it's never been recapitalized, I've never put any money into it other than that. We have never had a year with less than a ten percent increase and we've had many that were in the forty to fifty percent range."

Part of that growth includes expansion of the traditional lines of Military-oriented models into the realms of Science Fiction and Fantasy. "I would describe the entire hobby as not seeing a lot of growth, but being very stable. What you get a lot in the Sci Fi and Fantasy type of stuff is a lot of crossover from the military guys; especially from the Military and Historical figure painters. They're looking at magazines like yours and seeing this stuff and thinking 'It'd be nice to try something like that for a change.' That's why VLS is selling that stuff."

Growth and expansion mean reaching new customers, but perpetuating the hobby means bringing new, young modelers into the fold. Although Bob isn't seeing as many young modelers entering the hobby as he'd like, he's still optimistic about the hobby's future. "I'm seeing enough young modelers; there aren't many, but I don't think there ever have been. This isn't a hobby, in any facet of it, that attracts everybody. At one time in their life everybody has built a model car or plane, but it's just a select few that really tune into it. We're not getting hoards of young people coming into it. I'd like to see more of course, especially in my position. I'm not concerned about it going away for at least a few decades."

Most modelers are familiar with the "downtime" of the late teens and early adulthood when interest in the hobby wanes and then the period of rediscovery that brings them back to the hobby. That is part of the fuel that makes VLS grow. "We get at least two or three letters a week that say 'I was on the Internet' or 'I was here' or 'I was there and I saw your stuff and I had no idea. There's so much available now than when I used to do this. There's so much you can do it's unbelievable.' It happens all the time."

In the past few years, the advent of materials like resin and techniques like photo etching have improved both the quality and realism of both aftermarket items and kits. However, all these improvements are only a reflection of the skills of the modelers who use them. Bob points to improvements in his lines, but he also credits modelers in general and one Master Modeler in particular for the current state of modeling. "All the lines are improving. Even the plastic kits are improving. The technology is improving; the modelers are getting better. Fifteen or twenty years ago the top modelers were very secretive and wouldn't let anyone in on their special techniques, except for Shep Paine and he

spawned a whole generation of modelers. Everyone that's prominent in the model industry now has told me that Shep Paine was their inspiration. In my opinion, he's the father of modern modeling."

Although his own modeling has slowed down, Bob has an excellent reason for pulling back. "I've got one started now, but when I was really building models, I was prolific. Nobody could build as many as I could or as fast. I remember the Phoenix IPMS show of 1983, I built fifty-two models for that show and I came home with about that many trophies. I could turn them out with reasonable quality, good enough to win at a Nationals. I competed for two years and I've got close to four hundred trophies from that time. Then I decided if I was going to be a businessman I shouldn't compete. It was a lose/lose situation. If you beat your customers, they get mad at you. And if your customers beat you they start to question, 'Why did I think this guy was such a big shot?' Believe me anybody, no matter how good they are, can be beat."

One place where those improvements can be seen put to their best use is the VLS sponsored Mastercon, a gathering of some of the greatest builders in the hobby. True to its name, the Mastercon's competition is open only to registered "Masters" of which there are only about twenty-four hundred in the entire world. A typical Mastercon will see around three to four hundred attendees which includes only about one hundred fifty registered Masters. The show itself grew from a disillusionment among many modelers in the late 80s when competitions became more about tearing down someone else's work rather than having fun with the hobby and learning from fellow builders. Mastercon was created to be different from the beginning. "A lot of it with that show has to do with the camaraderie. It's very laid back and it's a bunch of guys who don't nitpick. The go in and talk models and have a good time. There are no magnifying glasses or dentist's mirrors allowed; it's just fun. That really helps because they learn from each other. They don't criticize, they learn. And nobody is too big to learn. It couldn't have been better if I'd tried. It's exactly what I wanted."

Expansion and changing times also meant changes for VLS. "In '94 we bought out our partner, Jos Stok, and last year I split with Verlinden. He's still doing his Verlinden Productions and we're still distributing it. As soon as that happened I bought Warriors Scale Models in California, I went to Canada and bought Custom Dioramics. Tech Star was a line that I'd had almost from the beginning, but had fallen dormant when Verlinden took over because he took over all the production and I handled the administration. We got that started back up. We started the new line called Legends and Lore. All four are doing better than expected. It takes time to develop something really hot, but we've got lots of plans and we're going into areas where we've never been. Legends and Lore, for example, is going to be half fantasy and half historical."

Another aspect of VLS is the modeling museum they operate in a historical section of St. Charles, MO. It houses exhibits of not only Bob's work but that of Shepard Paine, Louis Proenau, Joe Porter and many others. "Our museum, Miniature World, probably has more of the kind of stuff we do than any other museum in the world. There are probably ten thousand exhibits, it's a big place."

Staying in contact with his customers and keeping track of their demands is very important to Bob; he depends upon their input to keep his company running. "I listen. I'm a fanatic on service. If someone calls me and complains I take them seriously. I think that no one could argue that VLS isn't the best in terms of service in the industry. All the new product lines we take on come from customers' suggestions. They'll say 'We want Real Models from Germany.' And after four or five people ask for it, we'll look

into it. In the survey we send out, we'll feature new products from other manufacturers as well as our proprietary lines. They make suggestions and we tabulate them and come up with a pecking order. Then we use that as a guide to create product for the various lines."

As important as customer ideas and demands are, there are still times that listening can lead to calculated errors. "Anybody who tells you that they know all about this industry or this market, they're full of it. I've often said if that warehouse was full of stuff I think is cool, I'd be bankrupt. You've got to go by what your customers want. Over the years I've had several purchasing managers and they've always been modelers and they always will be, because modelers understand. But, on the other hand, all modelers have their favorites and all of those guys leave their mark. I've got stacks of their favorites out in the warehouse to this day. You've got to listen to the customer and even doing that, you can still mess up. You can't just kind of listen you've got to *really* listen. There are a lot of collectors in the Military market and collectors have the loudest voice, but they buy the least. They'll scream for something because it's not there, but the minute it comes out they won't buy it. They're only interested in it because they can't have it. When it comes out they may buy one, but a modeler will buy one of something and build it, then buy another and another and so on. You have to put that in as part of the equation as well."

Looking toward the future, Bob sees stability for the hobby. Even though some companies will go through hard times and even go under, the hobby itself will survive. "I think it will continue as it has been. As a businessman, you don't come into this hobby and create a market; you only steal market share. That's the way it's always been. When you come in and you're successful, you'll put someone else out of business. That's just how it is. I think it's going to be stable for years to come."

So, that's all it takes for success, a love of the hobby, a knowledge of international business, skill, contacts, respect for your customer's ideas and desires and \$92.00. Just gather up those few items and you can create a thriving hobby business. However, there is one catch...Bob Letterman has a really big head start on you and he's got a lot of very happy customers to show for it.

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Bob Letterman (left) and Lewis Pruneau, (circa 1985), a very well-known and accomplished modeler in his own right and a good friend of Bob's

CONVERTING *with* KITMAN

The Making of *Maximus*

with Norm "Kitman" Piatt

After seeing the Movie "Gladiator," I wanted a model, but there were no kits at that point. So what to do? Wait for something to come out? Or begin the challenge to make my own "Maximus." After seeing a review in *Modeler's Resource's*® "Strange New Things" article of Pacific Playthings' pre-painted snap kits of wrestling heroes, I decided "The Undertaker" kit would be a good starting point for the conversion. So, off I went to Toys 'R Us®. Now I had to figure out how to handle this conversion after a few e-mails to my friend Mark at pcmodeler.com. He suggested I use "The Rock" figure kit as the basis for the diorama, using the figure "The Rock" beating up on the fallen warrior.

I now had a scene taking shape in my mind. It would be after the battle in the beginning of the movie with General Maximus standing over a fallen warrior. Yes!

To start, break out the putty and hobby saw because this is going to be fun. First, cut off all the snap-fit attachments. Glue the arms, legs, head and torso together, but leave them separate. The sculpting of the figure will start with the head. However, as seen in the in-progress photographs, the head, torso and legs were assembled at the same time.

THE HEAD:

I was very surprised looking at Undertaker's face because he bore a fairly close resemblance to Russell Crowe. With some sculpting, he would take on the brooding look of "Maximus" quite well. Now, off with the long hair. We need to remove the hair from the sides of his head, the strands from his forehead and all the length in the back, using the hobby saw and a sanding stick to accomplish this task. Next, file and sand the rough spots. Test-fit the remainder of his head to the neck. Glue the head onto the neck and fill the seam. Fill in the head with putty leaving room to add more later, then set it aside to dry. Once dry, start adding on the final coat of putty to his head and sculpt in his hair. Sculpt in new ears and add more bridge to the nose. Add forehead creases and upper eyelids. Sculpt in brows and beard.

THE LEGS:

Using Plastruct Plastic Weld, I glued his legs together. I could see his stance wasn't going to work because his legs are spread far apart. I made the cuts it would take to put his legs side by side. You could also use "Stone Cold's" legs and hips. His stance is perfect and would be much less work. I had to sculpt new feet to go with Undertaker's legs. If you use the Undertaker's legs, the right leg will be cut off at the knee and ankle. I filled in the hole at the knee with putty and made a new knee joint out of putty, which created a fairly straight leg.

Remove the left foot at the ankle. New feet will be added later. To attach the legs to the hips, saw off the hips at the waistline. Mix up enough putty to make new hips. This will be covered with clothes and armor later so just get the size and proportions right. Once the putty is in place, stick the legs into it. Now shape in the butt and let dry. Fill in the ankle holes around one to two inches and attach metal rods into the putty leaving two

to three inches sticking out. Rough in the new feet and ankles over the rod, and let dry. Once dry, add on another layer. This may take two to three layers to complete the feet. Adding details is the final layer.

THE PANTS:

Sculpt on the pant legs that are visible between the skirt and leg guards. Wrap putty around each leg and add fold and crease details.

THE LEG GUARDS:

Press out some putty and get the general shape to place on the leg. Cut to shape with a sculpting tool. The leg guard is pretty basic and doesn't have any design work on them. Add straps to the back of the legs.

THE TORSO:

With the new legs on, I found it easier to handle the figure for adding on the chest armor. Start building up the chest and stomach using your reference photos. Once the chest armor base has been sculpted, let dry. Come back, sand and smooth your work. Then, draw on the design of the chest plate. This is a good way to lay it out so you can see if the chest plate lines up and is symmetrical. It may help you to draw the design out on paper first, in scale, and transfer it to the chest. Now fill in the design with putty, working one side at a time. Let the first side dry before moving onto the other side so you don't mess up your hard work. Drill holes along the bottom edge of the armor to add the rivets. I use pinheads for this detail. Cut the pinheads off about 1/16" long and superglue them into the holes. Once the front is finished, add putty to build up the back plate. Leave a space between the two plates at the side and make straps that attach the two together. Straps can be made either with putty or sheet or strip stock plastic.

THE SKIRT:

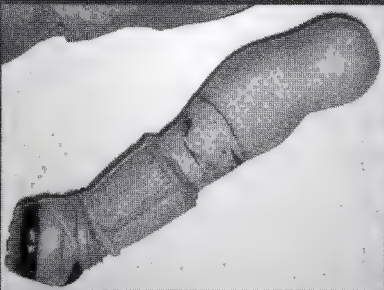
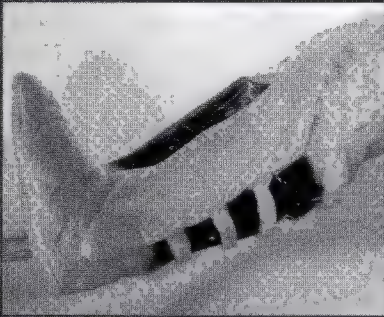
Shaping the skirt around the legs, mix up enough putty to do the front of the skirt. Let the putty set up for a ½ hour or so until it's stiff. (This is an estimate; it may take a little longer). Then press it out with your fingers, keeping your fingers moist so the putty won't stick to them.

Cut the piece to shape over the front of the legs. Add folds and creases. Butt it up against the bottom of the chest plate. With a hobby knife, remove some putty. This is so the leather straps that go over the top of the skirt will fit under the chest plate. Keep in mind there are two layers of leather straps to go over the skirt. So make the skirt and leather straps thin at the top. You may not get the look you want for the skirt the first time. If this happens, just remove the putty and start over. This goes for any of the steps involved. Let the skirt dry overnight. Repeat the steps for the back side. Begin adding the leather straps. Again, let the putty set up for a ½ hour or so. Make enough putty to do the front half of the figure. Take a dime size ball and flatten it out into a strip. The strip should be about two inches long and a ¼" wide. Wet your work surface (first) and place it down, then with a knife cut a "V" off one end. Place it on in the middle of the figure. Work your way around to the side. Once the front is done, let it dry overnight. Repeat the steps for the back side. Next, start the second row of smaller set of straps using the same process. Add small circles of putty to the ends of the smaller straps as ornaments.

THE ARMS:

Begin the arms by adding the leather wraps around the hands. Once dry, add the forearm protectors. This can be done by spreading the putty around the wrist and forearm and smoothing it out. Cut both ends to straighten them out using a hobby knife. Let dry and add the detail of the bands on top. I also repositioned the fingers on the left hand. Cutting off the fingers and supergluing them back in a new position. Fill in the gaps with putty and sand. After all the work is complete, cut the lower arms off at the elbows. Run wire through the shoulder holes as support for the new upper arms. Make the wire long enough to pass through the lower forearms. As the arms need to be at his sides, it is best to sculpt new upper arms. This can't be accomplished as is. Begin sculpting new upper arms in layers. This will take two to three layers. Once you have a good base layer built, add on the lower





arm. Sculpt one arm at a time so you can handle the figure more easily. Attach the lower arm with superglue or 5-minute epoxy. Blend the forearm in with putty. Now start to add on the final layer which will be for the clothes and uniform. Work from forearm up, adding the shirt, fur, upper sleeve and shoulder straps. So not to mess up your hard work, let each step dry before going to the next.

SHOULDER STRAPS:

Handle the shoulder straps in the same steps as the skirt straps.

ARMOR STRAPS:

The straps that go over the shoulders are sculpted like the leather straps. I redid mine a couple of times because it was pretty tricky for me. Once you're happy with the size and shape of the armor strap, cut out a few at one time and then place them on the figure, one shoulder at a time. After both sides are dry, add on the strips around the edge of the armor straps. Place a thin line of putty on the edge of the strap and use a hobby knife to cut off the extra putty. Start with the armor strap closest to the head and work down. Add rivets to the armor strap with small dots of putty.

THE SWORD:

Start the sword with .40 sheet stock and draw on the sword pattern, then cut out the pattern. Build up the sword with putty again and work in layers. Start with the blade, the guard, handle and pommel. I had fun making this sword. This is my third attempt at sword making and I will continue to experiment with different materials as a base for sword making. As for now, I find this to be a good method.

THE BATTLE-AXE:

Use a thick piece of sprue and .40 sheet stock as a base for the battle-axe. Cut out two axe blades in .40 sheet, attach the blades to the sprue handle by drilling out a section in one end of the sprue. Superglue the blades into the handle. Cover the axe blades with putty and add thickness to the blades. Shape the blades and add a bevel edge to them. Add on the center section between the two blades and use a 1/8" strip of putty for the centerpieces. Use tubing to add rivet detail. To create the leather wraps around the handle, add putty and use a modeling tool to sculpt in a criss-cross pattern. Once dry you can sand the blades and refine the bevel edge further. Scoring the blades will give it that "been in battle look" I found this detailing is great for realism.

THE FALLEN WARRIOR:

The Rock kit comes with the figure and the base I used with this diorama. Start by removing the snap-fit tabs. Assemble the two torso halves, legs and arms together. Also, it is not

necessary to remove the paint from the figure and base, as primer will cover everything.

THE FACE:

After looking over the figure, I began to sculpt new facial features; a more pronounced brow and forehead to deepen the eyes to get more of a barbarian look. The addition of a beard and a bit more long hair really helped make him more wild-looking.

THE ARMS:

The left arm was cut in half and each resulting hole was covered with .15 sheet stock and puttied over. Each arm half received shirt sleeves. Also I sculpted a wristband on the lower arm. Drill out the center of the severed arm hand to accept the battle axe. I didn't like the finger position on the right hand as it was, and thought it would look more natural for them to be separated. So, for the right arm, sculpting begins with the hand. First, remove the fingers and drill in four holes to attach wire, which will be superglued into the holes. Next, sculpt on the first layer of putty; build up two to three layers using the final layer for details. Next, add on the wristband and finish with the torn shirt sleeve.

THE SHIRT:

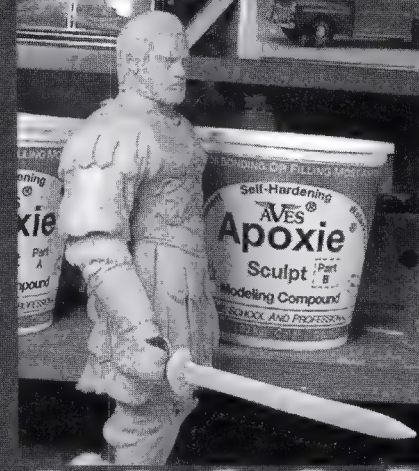
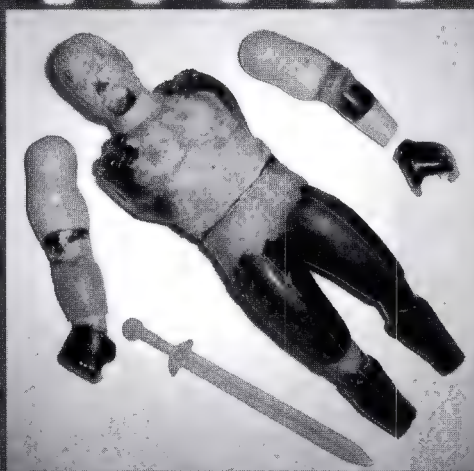
Now to begin the fur shirt, cover the torso with around a 1/16th of an inch of putty. Using your sculpting tool (a hobby knife will work for this step too), make small cuts into the putty starting at the neckline. Have the cuts flow in a downward pattern on the shirt. Also, give the cuts a little twist and turn; you don't want straight cuts. This was my first crack at fur and I was happy with the results. If you feel really ambitious, sculpting the cloak that Maximus wears with the wolves fur and cloth would be very cool. I thought about it, but decided against it.

THE BELT:

After the shirt is finished and dry, sculpt the belt. Start by attaching a strip of putty and cutting it to shape on the figure. A tip for cutting the putty: wet your blade before cutting; it will cut much smoother. Once the belt is dry add the skull, which can be sculpted as a separate piece beforehand. I *did* add the horns on once it was placed on the belt. I placed a couple of ornaments on the sides of the belt with small balls of putty pressed out on the belt. Use tubing to make inner circles on them.

THE PANT LEGS:

Working from the crouch area out, press out some putty, place it on the crouch and sculpt in folds and creases. Once this is dry you can add the crouch piece. Press out some putty and cut to shape and attach. It's then onto the upper left leg. I covered the piece in putty and began to sculpt in the folds and



crease details. On the lower leg, sculpt in the fur boot coverings using the same method for the shirt. Once the fur has set up for 20 minutes or so, use a wet toothpick or sculpting tool to press in the crisscross indentation for the leather wraps that cover the fur. Next, roll out some putty into strands and place them into the indentations. Then apply putty to the knee area and add extra where the boot top meets the pant leg. Leave some room at the top of the leg where it meets the upper leg so it can be blended in after it is attached. (Both legs have knee guards that will have to be removed before applying putty to them. I used my Dremel™ tool to grind them off.)

The right leg follows the same steps as the left except this leg is one piece. Once both legs are finished, work at blending the joints together. I didn't attach the legs for ease of painting later. When blending, use water. I wrap putty around the leg where it would fit to the hip or knee and dip the piece in water and press it into place. Then smooth it with a finger. Remove carefully and set aside to dry. Now they can be attached with epoxy later after the base is painted.

THE BASE:

I added to the back side of the base with a piece cut from Revell's "Lost World" T-Rex snap-kit and some sheet stock. The base was just a little undersized for its new purpose. I thought of just using sheet stock and putty to add onto the base. However, this would require a large amount of putty. And, after checking out my closet, the T-Rex base would be an easy add-on with a lot less putty used in the process. Also, the ground where Max is to stand is on an angle. It is necessary to build it up so he will stand straight. I drilled out the base so that the attachment rods in his feet could go through the base. I began to build up the ground under his feet and the surrounding area. Sculpt in the same rock surface as the rest of the base. On the new section I did the same texturing and blended in the two surfaces.

THE TREE:

Using a piece of plastic rod ½ inch in diameter and about 3 ½ inches long to start the stump with, I drilled a couple of small holes to the sides and added wire for the branches. Once I had the shape I was looking for in the branches, I began to add putty to cover the piece. I sculpted in the tree bark textures and placed it on the base to blend it into the surrounding ground. If you don't want to take the time to sculpt your own tree stump, you can get one from a number of kit reissues of Aurora's Batman or Dracula, as two examples.

THE FINISH:

Now that the kit is complete, it's just a matter of assembly

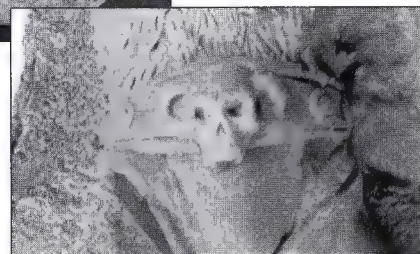
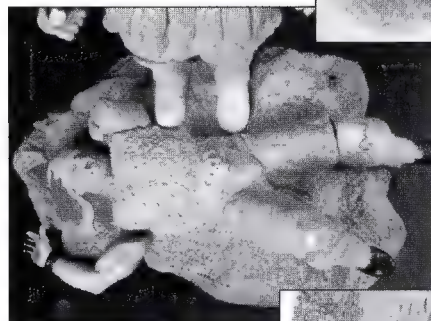
and paint and that will be handled by my friend Mark Fergel of pcmodeler.com, as he is very gifted painter. I am happy with the final sculpt of Maximus and the nice thing is I didn't have to wait for one to come out. Now to start my Gladiator version of Maximus from The Stone Cold snap-kit. Now...where did I put that putty?

TIPS:

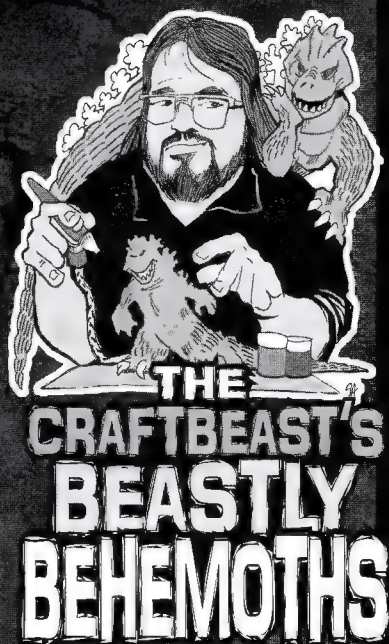
For the beginner and intermediate epoxy sculptors, working with epoxy putty can be fun, but it can be frustrating. The best tip is to almost always keep your tools and fingers slightly wet, but not too wet as the water will break the putty down. Use water when mixing your putty together, which helps keep the stickiness down and makes handling easier. If you lay the putty out to cut on a work surface, wet the area first. Don't mix up a big batch at one time or you'll find yourself with a big ball of hardening putty. It's always best to build up and work in layers, much like Sculpey™ adding the details in the final layer. Questions? Comments? Reach me via E-mail at: getwebbed@lvcn.com



Reference photographs can be found at:
www.dreamworks.com



Note the detail on the belt (above).



by Bill Craft

A FORCE MORE POWERFUL THAN 1000 H-BOMBS UNLEASHED TO DEVASTATE THE EARTH!

Welcome back friends of the "B" movie monster. There seems to be no end to these wonderful critters and I really enjoy bringing each and every one of them to you. My hope is that you younger readers can respect the ancestors of the modern giant cgi monsters of today. What was once state of the art in special effects is now considered outdated. So what does that say about today's special effects, especially when you consider that 30 years from now they too will most likely be outdated? Food for thought, boys and girls. So sit back and enjoy another installment of "The Beastly Behemoths" and fill your mind with the imagination and wonder of monster movies from long ago.

THE DEADLY MANTIS 1957

Who can ever forget the giant bug movies of the 1950s? "The Deadly Mantis" is one of my favorites. Produced by Universal Pictures, "The Deadly Mantis" was directed by Nathan Juran and starred Craig Stevens, William Hopper and Alix Talton.

I think that the Preying Mantis is the coolest insect out there, outside of the deadly Black Widow. Think of what a giant Mantis would be like. A savage and ruthless creature with an appetite for human beings. Makes me feel all warm and toasty inside just thinking about it.

An earthquake near the North Pole releases our giant Preying Mantis, that then proceeds to devour any human beings it can catch as it makes its way to the warmer climates of the south. Larger than an airliner, the giant insect is finally wounded by an Air Force jet and

knocked out of the sky. It finally meets its end in New York's Holland Tunnel, when the military fills it with bug-killing gas.

The effects of the Mantis are pretty good in this film. Even though these films were minimum in budget, they worked miracles in those days. Too bad Universal Pictures gave up the practice of making these kinds of movies. They were once the studio you could count on for great monster movies.

The model featured on the next page is a wonderful kit that is still available from Lunar Models. I don't think it can be surpassed, but I could be wrong.

Perhaps one day somebody will get a "Bug" up their wazoo and do another one. Until then, the world will just have to deal with this one.

WAR OF THE COLOSSAL BEAST 1958

Here we have one of the most recognizable giant monsters of the late 1950s. This creature has graced countless magazine covers in the past. The title of the film has gotten lost in the minds of most people due to the fact that the film is a sequel. Our "Beast" did not always look like this. The first film, "The Amazing Colossal Man," was made in 1957 and directed by Bert I. Gordon.

Our story concerns a certain military Colonel, Glenn Manning, portrayed by Glenn Langan, who is caught in a plutonium test blast. Instead of killing him instantly, it causes him to grow at an accelerated rate. After a rampage in Las Vegas, he confronts the military at Hoover Dam and plummets into the water below, supposedly to his doom.

Ah, but good "B" movie monsters don't die so easily. The colossal man returned for a sequel called "War of the Colossal Beast" in 1958. This film was directed once again by Bert I. Gordon and featured Dean Parkin as Colonel Manning, the ever-growing giant beastie.

Apparently bashing his head and shoulders on the rocks below Hoover dam at the climax of the last film, our "Beast" now features a half skull face and shoulder injuries. He is really upset by all this, of course, and proceeds to ravage the countryside before meeting his end on some high voltage lines.

I remember being scared to death at the sight of the Colossal Beast, the first time I saw it on television.

These two films are, by no means, "special effects" gems. They are, however, very fun to watch. The cast members are all running around looking so serious and frightened at an overgrown man. Well, I guess a 60 foot giant would be imposing.

Only two or three kits have ever graced us on the Colossal Beast. The most famous was by Billiken. I think a kit based on the poster art would be stellar.

So let us not forget this rampaging giant of a man, when we look back to the glory days of monster movie cinema.

SON OF KONG 1934

Talk about your films that have faded into obscurity. Some twenty-odd years ago, I was sitting in a "film-study" class in high school and we had a chance to see "King Kong" in the classroom on 16 millimeter. After the film was over, our instructor, who was supposed to know what he was talking about proceeded to tell us all, about the making of the film and whatnot. Since I had also seen "Son of Kong" numerous times, I asked him a question about it. To my amazement, he had no idea there was a sequel. To make a long story short, this brainiac sends me up to the front of the class so that I can tell my fellow classmates all about the sequel.

A lot of folks today still don't know there was a sequel. Production started right after the release of King Kong in 1933 and it was released in 1934. Robert Armstrong returned as Carl Denham and a few of the other original cast members also returned. No Fay Wray, however. Once again, that granddaddy of stop motion animation, Willis O'Brien, helmed the effects. It was not as grand as the original, but it was still fun nonetheless. Our story concerns the now bankrupt, Carl Denham searching for a way to replay his numerous lawsuits, brought on by the rampage of Kong in New York City. He eventually

hooks up with a seedy old acquaintance who asks him if he got the treasure from the island. Well, away we go back to Skull Island and a meeting with Kong's offspring, a smaller albino gorilla who, fortunately for our heroes, does not possess the savagery of his old man. A tragic ending befalls the little Kong as he gives his life to save the life of the man responsible for the death of his father.

Now I ask you. I know of only one kit based on little Kong and a couple of hybrid kits. What's up with that?

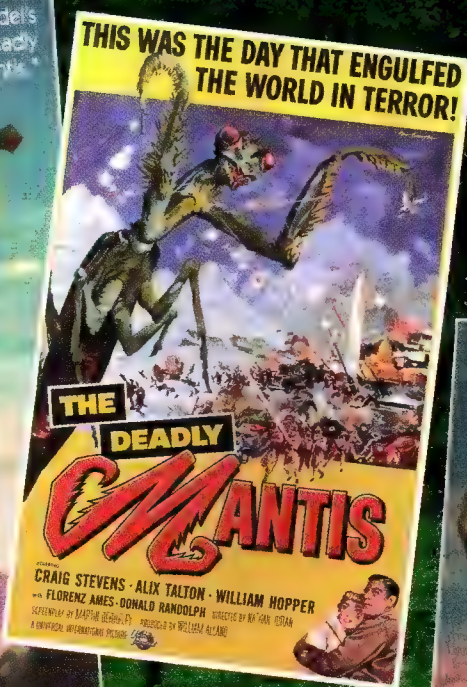
For those of you who do not remember, or like to revisit, here is the Joe Laudati sculpted kit from Resin From The Grave. I will forego any bashing segments here and simply state that this is an older kit and the castings are of the same caliber that many of us are used to from RFTG in those days. Experienced, seasoned modelers know what I am talking about. Ah, but if this is a kit that interests you, then have at it.

The kit features the climactic scene from the film where little Kong is holding Carl Denham up above the water as Skull Island sinks.

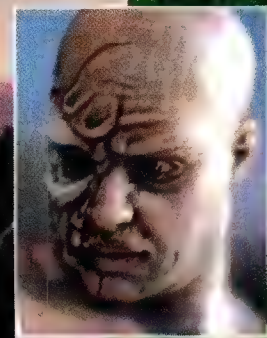
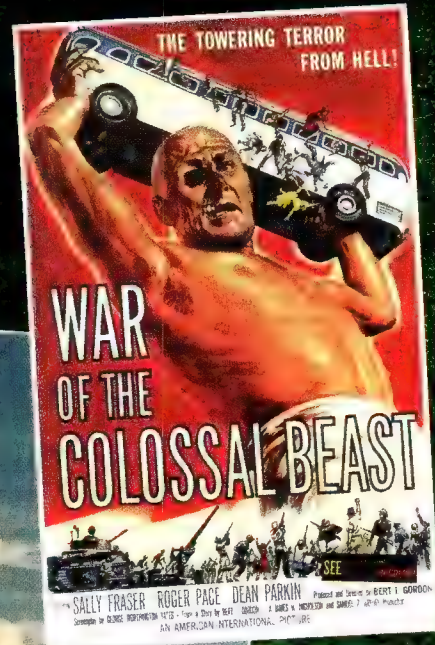
Now, I love daddy Kong. Don't get me wrong here. I just think that the little guy deserves a bit of resin immortality also.



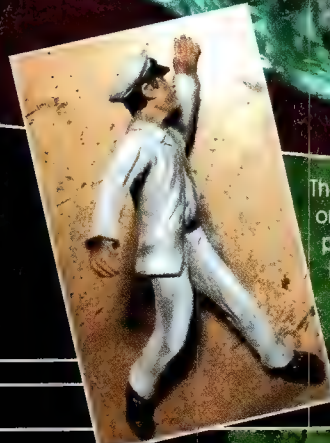
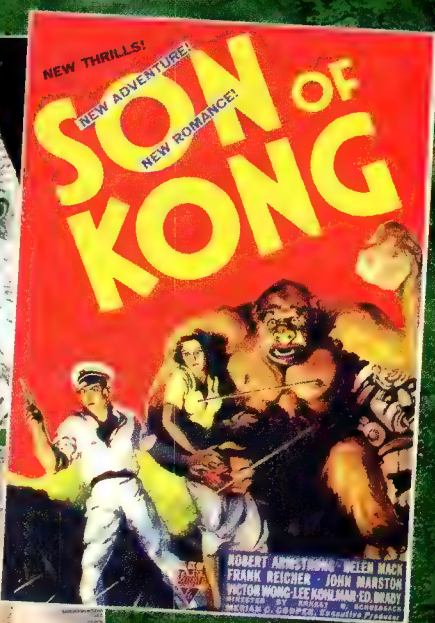
Lunar Models
"Deadly
Mantis"



Billiken's
stellar
Colossal
Beast



Resin From The Grave's
"Baby Gorilla."
aka, "Son Of Kong."



The sculpture work
on Carl Denham is
painful. Just keep
in mind that this is
an old Lauda
sculpt on an
old RFTH kit.



NEXT ISSUE
"THE
BEHEMOTH"
AND A FEW OTHER
GIANT FRIENDS!



WHERE ARE YOU?!

Scooby-Doo and all related characters and elements are trademarks of Hanna-Barbera © 2001



*Scooby Dooby Doo, Where Are You?
We've Got Some Work to Do Now...*



WITH FRED DEBUVO



A

h yes, remember that theme song? If not, don't despair, because you can tune in to Cartoon Network's™ Scooby-Doo™ on an almost daily basis, depending where you live in the world and what your cable station transmits into your home.

This is one of those shows that I thoroughly enjoyed watching as a kid. It didn't matter that most of the ghosts made repeat appearances on nearly every show. It also made no difference that the plot usually involved a group of adults (always outsmarted by a group of kids and a dog, by the way!) who were trying to scare people away from some old abandoned house or ware-

house. This usually had to do with the fact that there was some hidden treasure that the structure was hiding. What was important to me was that I could watch Scooby and Shaggy go through their antics with the rest of the gang as they solved mystery after mystery to save somebody from something.

Not counting Polar Lights' Mystery Machine and 1:24 scale figures of Scooby and Shaggy, I have yet to see large scale, licensed Scooby-Doo or Shaggy models, so when I came across these action figures at my local Target, I decided that everything was just ducky and it was now time to get working on that diorama that I had been thinking about creating for these guys if models ever came my way. Have you ever had that experience where you just had to have a model of a character that you enjoyed? If you did, you probably either just kept the idea simmering on the back burner or, if you really felt creative, you sculpted your own. Come to think of it, that's how a ton of models came into being within the garage kit industry. 😊

The Plot Thickens:

I had already decided that I wanted these two coming up to a doorway that gave the impression of being the entrance to a haunted house. As luck would have it, **Cellar Cast** had created a Castle Door Base #1 that I felt was just perfect. Even though the height of the door might arguably be best suited for a 1:6 scale figure or slightly taller (and these action figures are approximately 1:8 scale), the sizes worked out fine anyway. The door, being that much taller than the two figures, really became the focal point of the diorama. Scale is often relative.

My only question at this point was, "*What would Shag and Scooby be looking at?*" Obviously, they would be coming up to the door; Scooby with his nose to the ground following some scent and Shaggy with that all-too-familiar scared expression on his face as if he's just seen a ghost. The problem was, that apart from the lion head knocker, the door had no significant area where these two (or at least Shaggy) could be focusing on. It wouldn't work to have him simply terrified of the door!

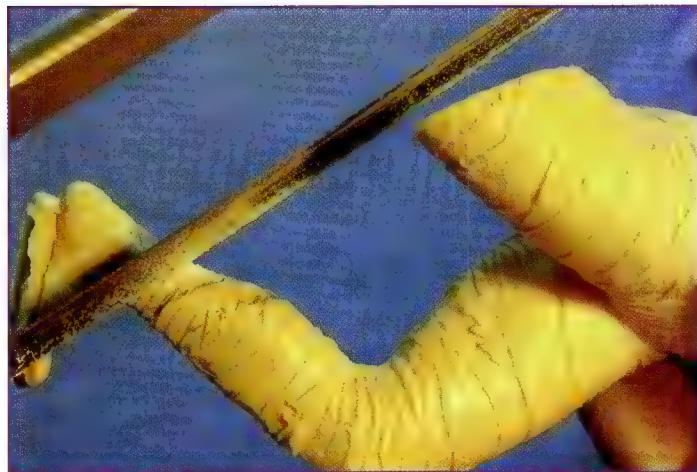
In looking around through my stash of kits, I first came across a gargoyle that Horizon had created a number of years ago. I held that up to the door for size and just to see if that would work. It looked okay and would certainly work in a pinch, but it just wasn't what I wanted.

Continuing to search, I came across one of **Testors'** out-of-production resin kits of an old Egyptian mummy called, King Thutmose. Taking it from the box, I realized it was the perfect size for this diorama, but so what? If I had him standing in front of the door, it wouldn't look right (as if somehow he had closed the door behind him) and then I thought, "*Why not have the mummy coming through the door as if he was a ghost?!*" Perfect! This was getting good! My interest was piqued! I was good to go! We were off and running!

Here was the story: *Scooby-Doo and Shaggy, constantly getting separated from Fred, Velma and Daphne, happen upon this old rundown building and through the front door floats this ghost from way back in the past.* This scenario could easily have taken place in any one of the cartoon's episodes! This was going to be fun!

Chop, Chop:

Once it was decided what the scene would look like, I began measuring and cutting to get just the right effect. I chose to have most of the mummy's body look as if he had nearly come through the entire door, so I measured where to cut his legs. It needed to be done at the correct angle because I wanted the mummy "ghost" to be nearly upright, not as if he was floating horizontally. Shaggy



A bit of hacksawing and parts of both legs are gone. A pencil line ensured the proper angle and then a dremel tool was used to finish the rough edge.



Preliminary positions for the characters. Scooby and Shaggy will be added onto the base and then the remaining ground-work will be added around them.

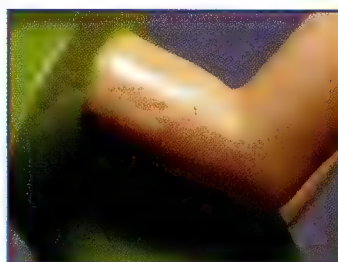


The full base begins to take shape with a piece of shelving. The stone walk is angled slightly to provide a better view.

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• (Right) The action figures had their share of seams and/or pits which needed to be dealt with prior to getting out the paint.
• To add texture to the walls, I tried a product that has been hanging out in my garage for a few years (left). Brush it on, let dry and paint.



A two-piece cauldron from Stephen F. Venters, Inc. was used for a bird bath/planter in the outdoor garden area.

This became the focal point for that particular area and eventually, plants were added which cascaded over the top and sides.

would be the first to see it, hence his scared expression. Scooby's nose was too near the ground so he wouldn't have noticed it yet.

Once the legs were sawed off and the other parts (left arm and hand) were glued into place, I drilled the holes from the back of the door that would "pin" him in place. These same holes would be used to mount him on a homemade stand so that painting would go easier.

Something To Stand On:

I began working on the base next. This required putting things into place until they looked just right. I felt that by angling the main part of the base (the stone stoop), this would provide a better perspective of the entire scene. I also left off one of the side walls to open up the scene more. I measured and cut the base out of an old shelf that was laying around.

I didn't want the full diorama to be too large, but Shaggy and Scooby needed an area that led up to the stone steps so I went

about 10 inches or so past the arc of the bottom step. I planned on placing bushes, dead flowers, stones (tallus) and whatever else I felt would work on the base to create the scene I was going after.

I decided to pin and glue the bottom part of the Cellar Cast base to the wooden shelf/base. Then, holes could be drilled up through where the side and back walls would be joined. Pins were glued in at this point so that the walls could simply be glued on later after painting.

We've mentioned this before, but you can use pretty much anything you need for pins. My preference is to use 1/8 inch armature wire. It's a bit more expensive but it's very strong, yet pliable. I picked this tidbit up from Tom Gilliland and it hasn't let me down yet. Whatever works for you - screws, nails, heavy-duty paper clips - is the key. The base was completed by using a product from Duncan called, Granite Stone Lava. Mix it up thorough-

Sculptamold was used for a realistic looking groundwork. Note the armature wire used as pins (immediate left photo). An outdoor garden area was added to provide additional depth to the diorama. The walls and flooring were created with plastic sheets of brick and other rock face available locally from hobby and train shops.



Paints & Stains:

The base was treated with **Transparent Black Wash Toner** to produce a darker, aged appearance (left). **Thutmose** was air-brushed with **Vallejo Model Air**, then **Bon Artiste stain** was applied and wiped off (right).



ly and paint it on. It has tiny granulated specs in it. There are a number of shades available through stores like Michael's.

Laying the Groundwork:

Once the stone base was glued and pinned in place, I created the actual ground with **Sculptamold™**, which I let set overnight. There was plenty of surface area to allow Scooby and Shaggy to stand and include other items that would enhance the scene. I made sure to rough sand the wooden shelf to allow for better adhesion by the Sculptamold, prior to applying.

This next part took some thought because I simply did not want to affix things to the base, thereby giving it a haphazard look. I was creating a scene, so I wanted to plan it out and make it look as though the front of this structure had once been tidy and kept up, with a garden and lawn. Over the years though, it had been abandoned and had become overgrown with weeds and whatnot. Falling into disrepair because of it, you could still see some semblance of its former glory in your mind's eye.

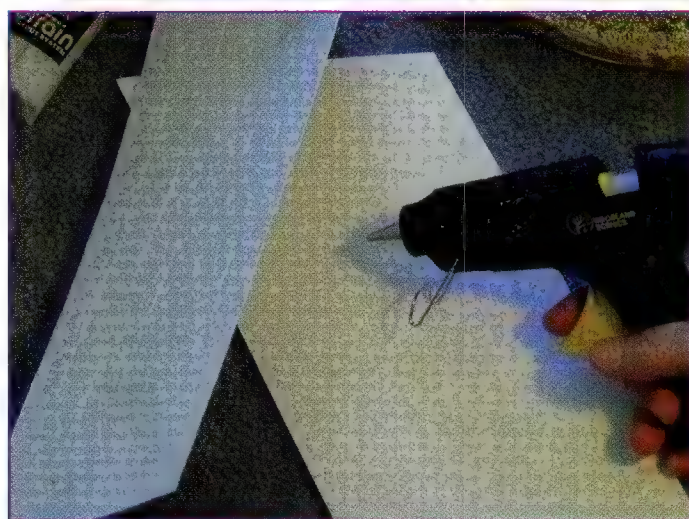
At the same time, I didn't want to get too intricate by adding too much which would take away from the overall story by being distracting and too busy. So, I opted for some bare patches of dirt, bushes and vines clinging to the doorway and walls. Here and there a flower tried to survive, but you could tell it wouldn't last.

Most of the products used for this area of the project were from **Woodland Scenics**; however, numerous objects (like the small flowers and vines) were purchased at Michael's Arts & Crafts. Ultimately, in this situation, I wanted something that looked pleasing to the eye and balanced. The main focus would be on the ghost and Shaggy's reaction to it.

Action Figure Madness:

I was not really looking forward to dealing with Shaggy and Scooby because of some of the inherent problems with the action figures themselves. You'll note in the photos that Shaggy has a number of seams that needed eradicating as does Scooby. This, of course, would mean that I would need to repaint them (AHH!), which would certainly be easier than attempting to spot paint by matching the colors (AHHH!). Fortunately, I didn't see any need to reposition the figures at all (I'll leave those kind of projects to the Craftbeast for now. Have at it, Bill).

Shaggy's facial expression was perfect and was normal to see on his face at least once or twice in each episode - sheer terror. The action figure of Scooby came with a bit of a smile, which was



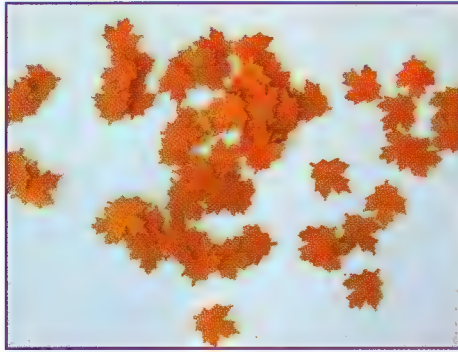
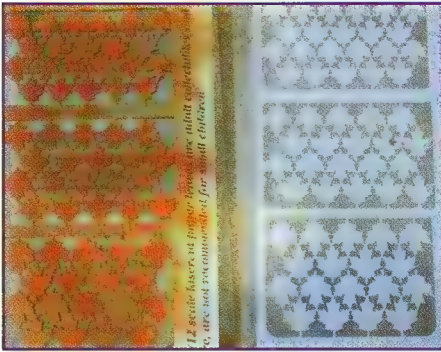
Hot glue was utilized to glue plastic to foam core in the creation of the walls and flooring.



A shot of the back of the diorama shows how and where it was reinforced.

Continued Next Page...

Right: Shaggy gets the Wonder Putty treatment from The Alchemy Works, to hide the seams prior to repainting.



1:12 scale leaves from a dollhouse shop (far left) were finished, painted and trimmed (near left).

fine in my mind because he hadn't yet seen the terror that Shaggy had noticed. The seams where each of Scooby's legs connected would have to be dealt with as would the neck area. This would also result in having to repaint the entire body too (AHHH!).

I won't bore you with the glorious details about how fun it was to watch those seams fade away into oblivion (and actually, I've dealt with seams that were much more horrendous than these on resin kits).

I *would* like to mention that I tried a few new products during the construction of this diorama. One of them was **Apoxie Putty** from Aves® Studios. This epoxy putty is excellent and apparently non-toxic. So much the better. If you try this product, I seriously doubt that you will be disappointed with it. I also tried **Wonder Putty**, from Mike Evans' The Alchemy Works. Both of these putties are excellent and worked well, affording me the opportunity to sand things down smoothly until nothing was left of the original seams. Pretty doggone cool.

Painting the Figures:

It was pretty much straightforward from here on out. Once the seams were filled and sanded, a light sanding was completed over each figure's body and then they were washed and primed. Shag and Scoob were then painted using a new paint product from Vallejo acrylics called **Vallejo Model Air**. These paints are airbrush ready and they work very well. I was very pleased with the results. Once completed, the figures were set aside to completely dry and then sealed with Testors DullCote™.

The mummy was next and I toyed with the idea of priming it white and then adding a wash (you know, to make it look more like an ethereal ghost), but then thought that it would probably simply wind up looking like a figure primed white with a wash added. So, I chose to paint it, again utilizing the Vallejo paints, to look similar to the one on the box art. Not too shabby in the end.

For all the painting, I used my **Iwata** airbrush with a .5 ml



needle which worked very well for airbrushing acrylic paints! The needle that came with the Iwata was too fine to do the proper spray job with acrylics. For other paints (Holbein, Golden, etc.) they work well, but you *will* need to go for the bigger needle, head and nozzle if you plan on using acrylic paints.

When all was said and done, I wound up painting the mummy with a light shade of tan and adding washes of slightly darker browns so that the folds of the bandages really stood out. It also gave it a worn, dirty look. The headress was painted with brighter colors, reminiscent of the Ancient Egyptian way of decorating the mummies and tombs of the dead.

For Shaggy and Scooby, I tried to keep a color scheme similar to what they had originally come in, which wasn't too difficult although I probably made Scooby a bit too dark. Since these guys are cartoon figures, I kept them clean looking and didn't go in for too much in the way of drybrushing or washes.

Places Everyone!:

It was close now, very close. Once I had gotten to this point, things happened at a whirlwind pace and before I knew it, it was time to get everyone into their respective positions so I could move onto the next model.

This next step is probably the most important step in the entire project. Things have to be positioned carefully and correctly so that they look right. There are actually books out with numerous chapters that deal with just this subject written by those in the military/historical end of things.

I wanted to position Shaggy and Scooby close enough to the front door so it would look like they were almost there and then...BAM!...a ghost would come walking through the door! This, of course, wouldn't set too well with either Scooby or Shaggy, but at this point, there wasn't too much they would be able to do about it. They weren't far enough away so that the ghost might not see them and they weren't close enough so that the ghost could reach out and grab them.

I decided to place them both near the bottom of the step and make it look as though they were getting ready to head up to the door. This offered enough room between them and the ghost and yet provided just enough tension between all the characters.

Each figure was pinned and glued into position and I was

Scooby-Doo gets his seams filled with Testors Red Putty. This is the first of a number of fillings, sandings, more fillings and more sandings. When completed, his neck seam as well as his leg seams were completely eliminated!

Photographing the finished diorama was very time-consuming. Thanks goes to Dave Bengel for his expertise in getting just the right look. Dry ice, cool blue light bulbs and blue gels placed over the lights themselves created a nice moonlit evening for Scoob and Shag.

Something like a moat was constructed around the diorama to contain the dry ice (for a few minutes anyway) and keep it from dissipating too quickly.

This was a lot of fun to do and, in my opinion, added a bit more realism to the overall scene.



done.

I was ecstatic to realize how far I had come with this model and quite pleased to see it take shape. In every way this is a real model, from the figures to the base, to everything in between. I finally had it...a Scooby-Doo and Shaggy Too model diorama!

Now, of course, someone will actually get the licensing and release these guys in large scale kits....:) And that's fine too. 😊



Sources:

Base:

Cellar Cast
9621 - 54th Ave South
Seattle WA 98118
Tel: 206.723.6801

Vallejo Paints:

R & K Productions
31316 Via Colinas
Unit 105
Westlake Village CA
91362
Tel: 818.991.9044
Fax: 818.991.9585

Shaggy and Scooby happen upon a ghostly adventure!



STEVE WANG'S... Gillman

GARAGE KITS ARE SUCH EASY PREY!

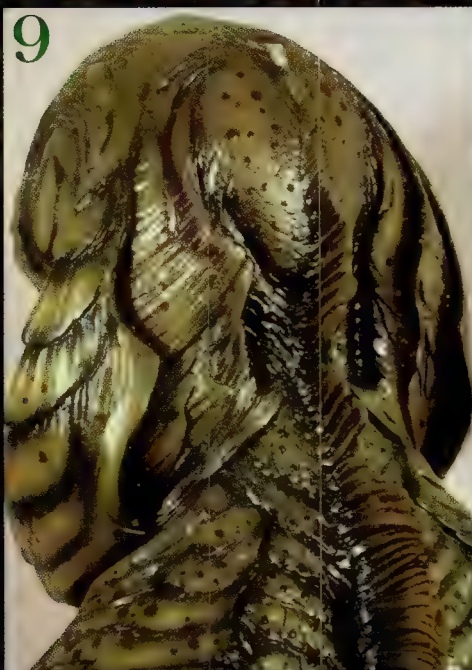
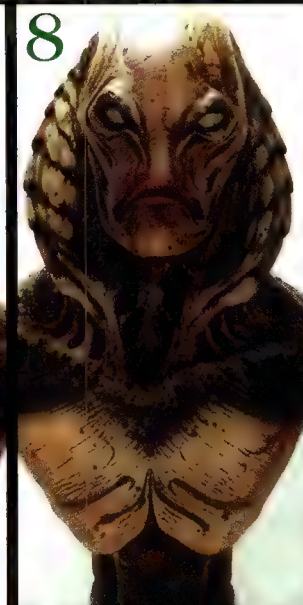
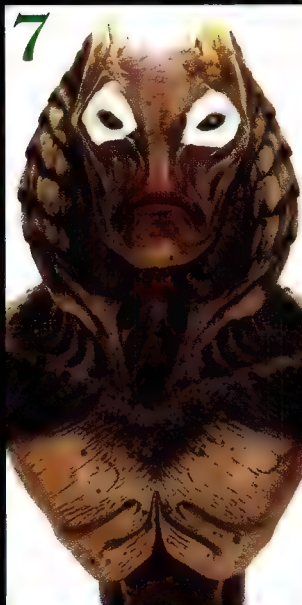
with Jerry Buchanan

This garage kit world of ours can act as an outlet for a sculptor to try new ideas, or let his imagination run freely and create anything his heart desires. He is not confined to standards or limits that others may impose on him. Because of this, we have seen some interesting creations come to light that the general public probably knows nothing about. Take for example, Steve Wang's Gillman bust. This two-piece vinyl kit released by Horizon puts a new twist on a classic character.

Steve definitely has a distinctive style and it really shows in this sculpt. When I first saw it, I thought it was the head Zoanoid from Guyver 2 Dark Hero - a movie that Mr. Wang produced and directed. Just add some gills and you have an original Creature From The Black Lagoon.

I wanted this unique kit to have an unconventional paint scheme, but I also wanted to retain the dark greens and burnt umbers that I have used on previous Creature kits. The first step was to base the kit in a medium olive green (Fig 1). A dark red color is then sprayed into the gill areas, eyes,





lips, and folds of the skin (Fig 2). This dark red color was then sprayed in vein-like patterns across the head and chest (Fig 3). The medium green shade was lightened with raw sienna and misted over the entire figure at this point to tone down the red color. The chest area was sprayed with a tan-flesh color and black was used to deepen the shadows (Fig 4).

I also retraced the vein pattern on the top of his head with black to make it more defined (Fig 5). I took a fine-tipped brush and painted the bumps on his scales and added random spots here and there (Fig 6). The next step was to make a thick stain that many in the hobby now refer to as a "glaze." I mixed up burnt umber, a touch of black, Liquitex Gel Medium, and some airbrush thinner to make a thick, yet slightly runny glaze. This stuff is applied liberally to the kit in sections and then wiped off with a damp paper towel. What happens is that all the deeper recesses and details hold the dark pigment giving the overall paint scheme greater depth.

To paint the eyes, I first masked around each one with latex mold builder to protect what had already been paint-

ed (Fig 7). A turquoise color was applied as a basecoat. White was then stippled onto the wet turquoise paint using a small piece of sea sponge. The mask was then removed and black was used to outline the eyes (Fig 8). The pupil shape will really determine the overall mood of the character. I had tried oval frog's eyes, but I thought he looked a little goofy. I decided to go for the slit-pupils that gave him a more menacing look.

To simulate stone, I base coated the base with a medium-gray color. With an old toothbrush, I spattered it with black and white paint for a granite look.

We need more sculpts and kits based on original designs. I believe this is the kind of spice that will keep the hobby from becoming too bland!



ImHoTep GETS BUSTED!



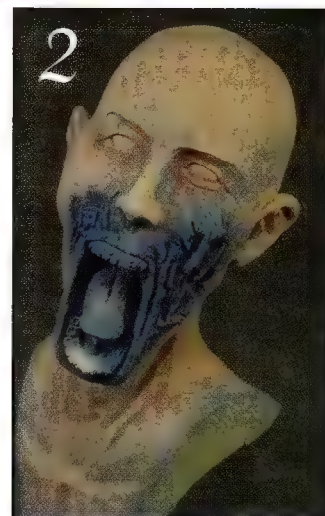
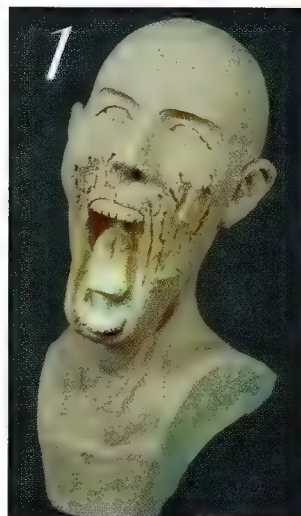
*Build-up & Photos by Mike Morgan
Article by Cindy Morgan*

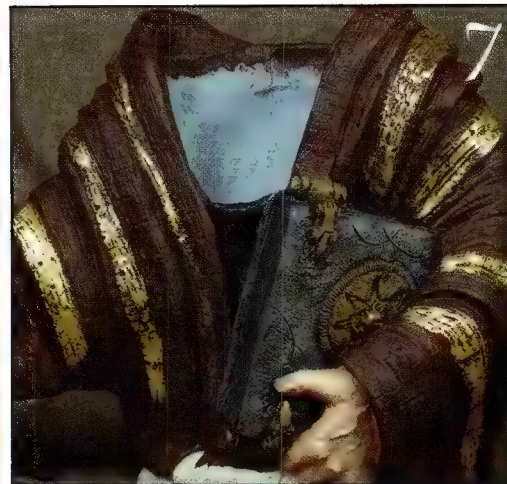
Mummies and the undead have a special place in the hearts of this pair of Morgans. Seems like we just can't pass them up! The shelves and closets are filling too quickly.

Sculptor Chris Elizardo and Fatman Productions have "busted" Im-Ho-Tep from the Universal Studios movie "The Mummy". The bust is roughly 1/4 scale and consists of 3 pieces. Chris did a really great job of detailing this guy.

Mike did the usual cleaning, seam cleaning and priming. This was an easy piece to build. For the skin, he began by airbrushing a base coat of medium flesh (*Fig. 1*). To give the skin a mottled look, Mike's first mixture consisted of Payne's Gray with medium flesh. This he airbrushed in a spotted pattern over the entire skin area. He also used this mixture in the rotting area on Im-Ho-Tep's face and temple area. To add more depth, Mike took this first mixture and applied a coat along the side of the nose, under the brow and down the neck and chest. Mixture two was Red Oxide and medium flesh. This he airbrushed all over the head/neck area and a bit on the hands in a mottled pattern (*Fig. 2*). A light misting of medium flesh blended the colors, but also allowed the mottled color layering under the skin to show through.

Shadows were added by lightly airbrushing a medium flesh and Burnt Umber mixture (*Fig. 3*). The rotting area of Im-Ho-Tep's face received a wash of Polytranspar's Black Umber. Polytranspar is a line of paints used by taxidermists. It has a sheen, but really works great as a wash to give a wet look. Once this was dry, Sandstone Gray was drybrushed over the rotting skin. The Polytranspar was also used to paint the eyes, eyebrows and to add more shadows to the eyelids (*Fig. 4*).





Testor's DullCote sealed it all.

The robe was base coated in Burnt Umber. Mike used charcoal to base coat The Book of the Dead (Fig. 5). Next he drybrushed the book with Metallic GunMetal Gray. The book hinges and lock were drybrushed with Antique Gold and then lightly drybrushed with Bright Gold. To brighten up the book, Mike lightly drybrushed it with Metallic Silver. A wash of Dark Burnt Umber was worked over the book to blend the colors and add an antique look (Fig. 6).

For striping and accents on the robe, Mike used some gold foiling (Fig. 7). A wash of Dark Burnt Umber was applied to the entire robe. Next came a wash of Polytranspar Black Umber. To deepen the shadows in the folds and to bring out the details, he selectively applied a thin wash of black. Highlights were added by drybrushing medium gray and then light tan (Fig. 8).

Mike wanted the base to have an Egyptian sandstone look so he base coated it in Raw Sienna. Next he sponged on light gray and then sandstone. These colors were blended with a wash of Burnt Umber. This wash also deepened the shadows and brought out the details. DullCote sealed the base (Fig. 9).

Now for the canopic jar. Of course, you all know that canopic jars were used to hold the vital organs of the mummy. Fortunately, this one is empty - at least we hope it is! Mike used white for the base coat, except in the areas where he planned to gold foil. These areas he base coated dark brown. To give the white area added texture and an antique, aged look; he sponged on medium gray (Fig. 10). A wash of Raw Sienna was worked over the white area to finish it.

Gold foiling was applied around the bottom of the jar and part of the top area. Polytranspar Transparent Sailfish Blue was used to add the striping. Aiding in the antique look, Mike brushed on a light wash of Burnt Umber (Fig. 11). When everything was dry, a final coat of Dull-Cote was sprayed on to seal. This bad boy is now done and ready to go on the shelf with the other Egyptian pieces in Mike's ever-growing collection. Really great reference material and pictures can be found in Pat Cadigan's book, "Resurrecting The Mummy The Making of the Movie."

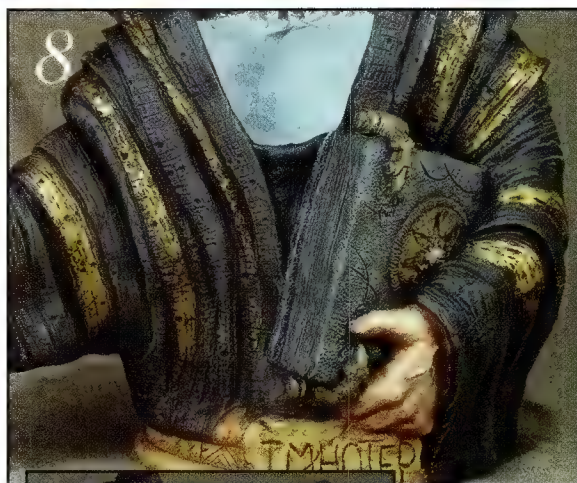
This is a really nice piece to add to a collection or a first piece to begin a collection. Fatman Productions can be reached at 513-734-1317 or frank@fatmanprod.com.

Feel free to contact the Glue Queen or her Glue King with questions or comments pakrats@earthlink.net.

Until next time -- Happy Modeling!



http://home.earthlink.net/~pakrats/Mausoleum_home.html



HORROR IN THE... Cornfield





I love horror movies. From the classic black and white Universal Studio thrillers of the 1930s and '40s to the independent "splatter movies" of the late 1970s and '80s. Call me twisted, but I believe these cinematic fantasies both repel and attract all of us, appealing to the darker side of human nature.

Being a model builder, I have the ability to capture these two-dimensional images off the theater screen and recreate them at home in three dimensions to frighten my pet cat. Numerous kits of horror subjects have been available during the past 40 years. One of my favorite sources of modeling material is action figure toys.

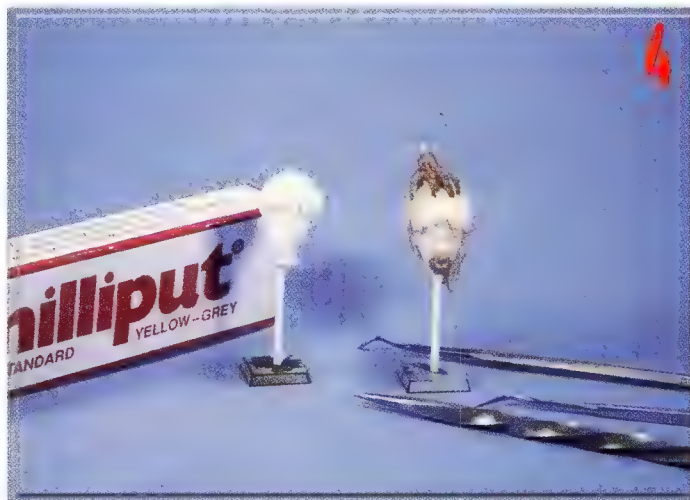
The quality of these toy figures has excelled to great heights over the past few years. Setting the new standard is McFarlane Toys, offering subjects with intricately detailed sculpture that rivals or exceeds the best model kits. Even the assembly line paint jobs are very good, evidenced by McFarlane's *Spawn*, *KISS*, *Sleepy Hollow* and *Movie Maniacs* series. My only complaint is most of these figures are not supplied with display bases. To me, Freddy Krueger, Pumpkinhead, Jason and their demonic companions look virtually naked just standing on my display shelf.

Making effective bases and vignettes is not that difficult. I'll describe a few basic diorama techniques and show you how easy it is to convert action figures into first-rate miniature movie displays. Come on; let's play with some cool toys!

A Maniacal Plan

McFarlane's *Movie Maniacs* offer some of the most popular subjects for us horror fans - *Leatherface*, *Norman "Psycho" Bates*, the *Crow*, *Chucky* and several more. One of my favorites is *Michael Myers*, the serial killer from John Carpenter's 1978 low budget thriller, *Halloween*. Until the release of *The Blair Witch Project*, Carpenter's gem was the most successful independent motion picture of all time.

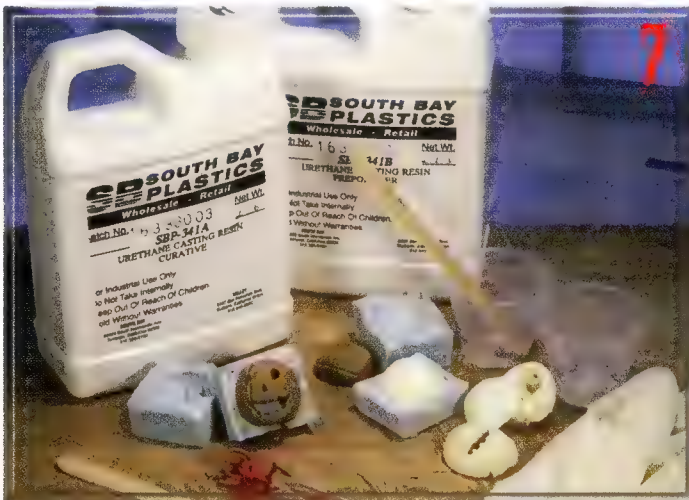
Research is always a good excuse to watch and enjoy this film for the umpteenth time on video. McFarlane's action figure fatefully captures the appearance of an emotionless, cold-blooded killer. So as to not upstage the figure with a large display base, I chose a 6-inch wide, round section



sliced from the trunk of a fallen tree (*Photo 1*). The coarse appearance of this base suited the outdoor vignette I wished to create. Rather than depict a scene from the film, I chose to design a display that suggested the title of Carpenter's movie. Making a few sketches, I came up with an idea I call "The Cornfield."

Costuming a Killer

To maintain correct spatial relationships between subjects, I usually construct the figure and diorama base simultaneously. In this instance, for the purpose of clarity, we'll



Joint seams on McFarlane figures usually are tight fitting and require minimal filling. But if you pose a figure to an extreme motion, clothing wrinkles may not match up. Re-sculpting becomes necessary to correct this. I use two-part epoxy putty, in particular A+B Epoxy Putty from the H.B. Fuller Company, to sculpt and fill seams. Originally intended for plumbing repairs, this putty is very pliable once mixed, water soluble when soft - which makes it easy to smooth out - sets in about three hours and cures hard overnight. The cured putty can be carved and sanded like wood. When primed, this material accepts all types of paint. So many modelers and figure sculptors have discovered this brand of epoxy putty that more hobby shops are now stocking it.



Dental, wax-carving tools and clay-sculpting knives work great for spreading and sculpting epoxy putty ([Photo 3](#)). You'll need to have a cup of tap water handy to dip your tools and fingertips in. Moisture will prevent putty from sticking to the tools and a wet finger can smooth out rough surfaces.

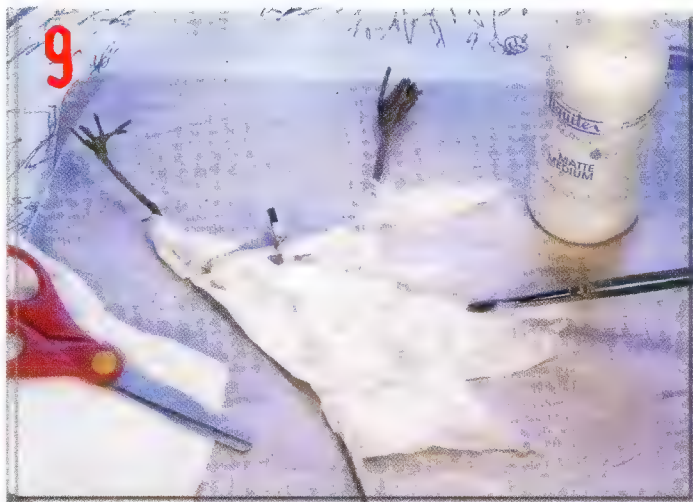
Milliput is a British product similar to A+B putty. It's been around forever and I occasionally use it. It comes in three or four grades, each one a finer grain than the other, allegedly making it better for sculpting. My Michael Myers carries a grisly trophy in the shape of a decapitated girl's head. I found a proper scale head in my spare parts box and altered it with Milliput ([Photo 4](#)).

Painting was rather straightforward with Michael Myers. No complicated costuming with this figure. I used acrylics throughout, followed by a standard dark wash for the shadows and dry brushing for the highlights. However, I did add a pair of "effects" touches. Fine grain sand was mixed with a gray-green paint and applied to Myers' coveralls to represent mud ([Photo 5](#)).

tackle Michael Myers first.

Poor quality figure toys often have glaring mold seams, oversized joints and clunky posing. McFarlane's designers are top-notch, minimizing these problem areas. Their figures still need some clean-up work, however. Using a sharp hobby knife, I carefully sliced off seam flash and molded on trademark lettering ([Photo 2](#)). The figure's pose was decided upon and a drop of superglue was added to each joint to permanently fix them. I removed the head to make it easier to handle when I painted it later.

This grisly subject also demanded blood. The way a modeler handles this small detail can make or break a figure or diorama. A little blood goes a long way and splotches of bright red paint all over will mark you as a tasteless amateur. Blood runs from wounds in fine ribbons and rarely is bright red. This is especially true when blood soaks into clothing. Except in the case of white fabric, blood appears as a dark, wet spot. The best paint I've discovered for fake blood is



Tamiya's Clear Red acrylic. Clear Red has a deep red color, translucent, drips and congeals like the real thing as it dries. Yuck!

Set Construction

When planning this vignette I wanted to create an effective backdrop for the figure, but not overshadow the main subject. I was very impressed by the sets and art direction of Tim Burton's movie, *Sleepy Hollow*. The opening sequence in the film features a spooky cornfield guarded by a very tall, demonic scarecrow. Although Myers didn't appear anywhere near a cornfield in the Halloween films, the image of him emerging from this lonely rural scene after a fresh kill struck me as twisted and perfect.

A wood fence was a nice foreground set piece. Mine was fashioned of basswood strips (Photo 6). Nails were made from short lengths of plastic rod inserted into drilled holes. To accentuate the brutal scene, I broke the fence partially down, breaking the fence boards by snapping them with my fingers. Miniature basswood strips splintered like its full size cousins and were very effective-appearing.

It was Halloween and I needed pumpkins. The McFarlane figure was packaged with a hollow jack 'o lantern, but one was not enough. The solution was to make an RTV mold of the jack 'o lantern and cast duplicates in urethane resin (Photo 7). This process is beyond the scope of this article, but check out "A Beginner's Guide to Mold Making and Casting" in *Modeler's Resource*®, Issue #31, for an in-depth demonstra-

tion.

Constructing the scarecrow became the most fun part of this project and fairly easy to execute. I loved another excuse to view *Sleepy Hollow* on DVD. This marvelous video format has become my main tool in researching movies. It was simple to do a frame-by-frame analysis of the scarecrow scene and make design sketches. Basswood strips provided the scarecrow's torso and shoulders, while my front yard ivy bushes grew his natural twig arms and hands (Photo 8). These were glued together with Elmer's School Glue and Milliput filled seams in the jack 'o lantern head.

The windblown robe required a little more work. I've used facial tissue successfully in the past for miniature clothing and though the material in its natural state is fragile, you can stiffen and sculpt tissue with acrylic matte medium. Spreading a sheet of wax paper on my worktable, I folded cut pieces of tissue around the scarecrow's wooden "skeleton." I then brushed thin coats of matte medium on the material (Photo 9). Not too much matte medium because heavily soaked tissue would have dissolved. I frequently lifted the scarecrow off the wax paper to keep it from sticking and shaped the robe with my paintbrush. This was not as difficult as it appears. The matte medium set quickly and the robe's wrinkles eventually retained their shapes. Once dried, the tissue clothing became stiff and ready for painting (Photo 10).

• Horror...Concludes Next Page •



• *Horror in the Cornfield...Continued from page 41* •

At this point, I wanted to test my scene idea. I arranged the main set pieces and the Myers figure, repositioning each part until I felt satisfied (*Photo 11*). The scarecrow and fence received their acrylic colors, weathered by the same painting technique as the figure (*Photo 12*).

Planting the Field

Miniature landscaping is one of my favorite hobby activities. After the tedium of sculpting and detail painting, I find "planting the field" to be spontaneous and fun. Many modelers don't feel this way, dreading the ordeal of fabricating natural environments. I believe they fret far too much over recreating exact duplicates of plants in miniature. The key to realistic foliage is simulate the shape and suggest the color and texture of growing plants. If properly done, the viewer's eyes will capture the overall appearance and fill in the gaps because they know what the real article looks like.

For example, the corn stalks are a prominent part of this scene. You can't buy them in kit form, so you must look for something that suggests the plant's appearance. I spent an hour in a crafts supply store browsing through the dried floral materials. Dried plants are usually treated with a preservative and you can also spray them with an additional liquid treatment to extend their life. Many of these dried plants, baby's breath for example, suggest tiny wild flowers. Others, like asparagus fern, are diminutive versions of larger plants. Stalks of wild grain caught my eye. The closed kernels

resembled ears of corn and the leaf-covered shafts could double as stalks. All I needed to do was to thin out the bushy bunches of grain, cutting off and reattaching the "ears" where I felt they looked best (*Photo 13*).

Woodland Scenics produces numerous synthetics, mostly shredded foams, that can be intermixed for more realistic colors, and attached to the diorama base with white glue or acrylic matte medium (*Photo 14*). There are a wide variety of miniature grass and turf products available at model rail-roader stores.

After I completed the landscaping, I set the diorama aside overnight to give it a rest. It's always a good idea to put some distance between yourself and the project at this time. A new day will give you a fresh perspective and you'll be surprised at discovering numerous flaws you swear weren't there yesterday. An hour spent on touch-up and I sat back, chilled for a moment. Michael Myers was actually standing in my room (*Photo 15*)! Try this novel approach of incorporating action figure toys into your next project.



Any questions or comments can be e-mailed to: info@monstermodels.com or drop by Hilber's web site, www.monstermodels.com, and visit photo galleries of his miniatures online.



Krafty Korner

with Cindy Morgan

Do not adjust your bifocals. We have taken control of this magazine column. You are now entering the "Krafty Korner." That's right guys, the Glue Queen is going to take you into the depths of the crafting stores and show you all sorts of products and techniques that, dare I say it, actually work for model building!

Let's begin with "Styrofoam 101." There are various densities of Styrofoam (Fig. 1). Regular white has a medium open weave density; packing Styrofoam is denser with smaller, closer holes; oasis is a soft floral foam - easily carved but not very strong without a sealer. Then you have various shapes. You have your sheets, your cones, your open circles, balls, eggs and it goes on and on.

Styrofoam is very versatile for using in bases, back walls, columns, etc. OK, you've designed your base, picked out your Styrofoam, now how do you cut it? Go to your kitchen and get a serrated steak knife (Fig. 2). Rub the steak knife across a candle. The candle wax helps the knife slice right through the foam. An electric scroll saw takes care of the job in no time. You may have seen electric foam cutters in hobby tool catalogs. If you're going to be doing a lot of Styrofoam cutting, you might want to invest in one. Costs run from \$24.00 up to \$150.00. My choice is a battery-operated foam cutter that I purchased at Hobby Lobby for \$6.99. It runs off two D-cell batteries and melts through the foam. The only drawback with this tool is that you're somewhat limited to the width of the foam.

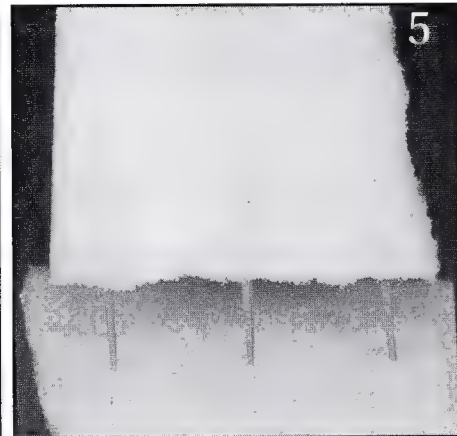
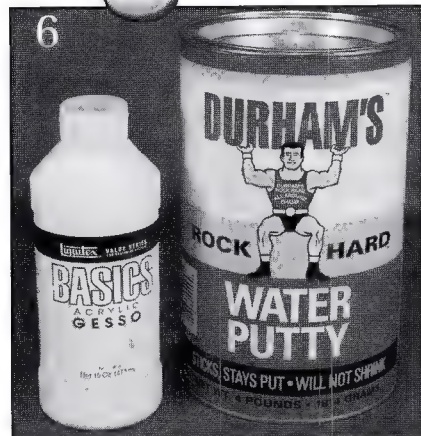
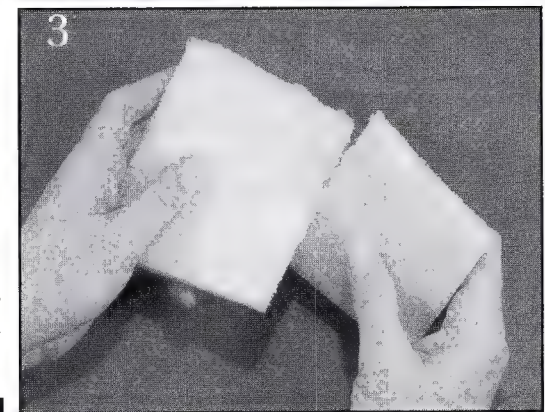
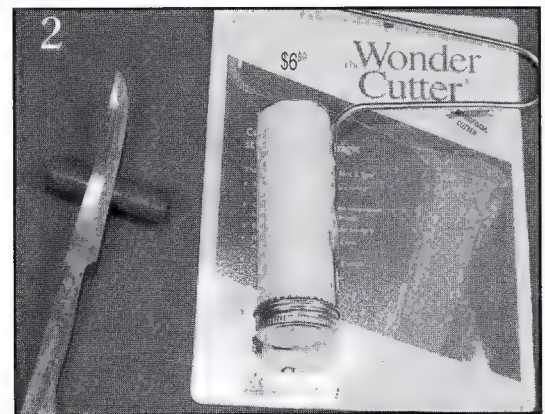
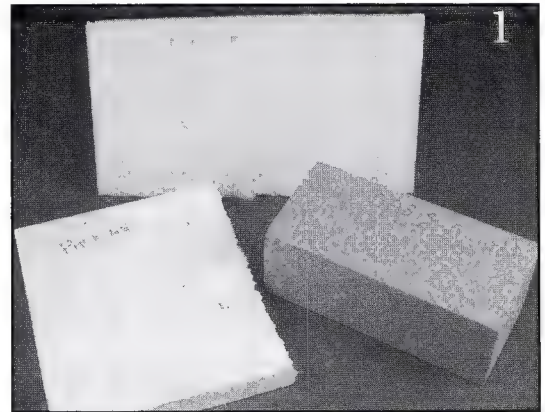
After you have cut your Styrofoam you'll probably have some rough edges. Smoothing them is simple. Take another piece of Styrofoam - a scrap piece will work - and rub it against the rough edge. This acts like sandpaper and smooths it right out (Fig. 3). It's a miracle!

Now you need to glue your pieces together. Beware! Some glues will eat right through the Styrofoam. My choices include good old "Elmers," Aleene's Tacky Glue and Cool Bond Glue Gun (Fig. 4). A hot glue gun will work, but it may melt the top layer of the foam and may not hold the pieces together well. Before you apply the glue, use toothpicks to join the pieces together (Fig. 5). This will give some strength to the joint and will also hold the pieces together while the glue dries.

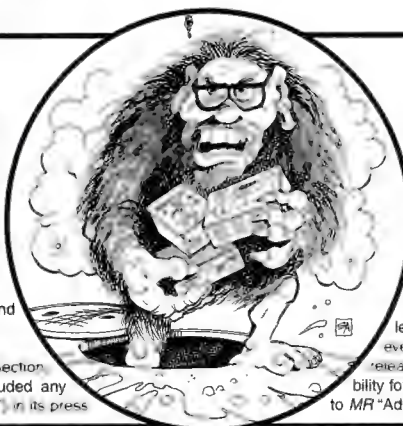
Sealing the Styrofoam to make it ready for paint can be accomplished with several products. My favorites are Durham's Water Putty and Gesso (Fig. 6). Cellucloy and Plaster of Paris are also good sealers, as are good old spackling compound and sheetrock mud. All of these take texture and paint well, even though Gesso is better for smooth surface design. The key to adding texture is allowing the sealer to set up a bit before carving, imprinting, etc.

Well, this should get you started into the world of Styrofoam. Make a trip to your neighborhood craft store and check out the variety. Feel free to send questions or comments to me at pakrats@earthlink.net. Stay tuned for more from Krafty Korner article, and remember guys, crafting and craft stores aren't just for girls anymore!

MR



Strange New THINGS



Coming at You!

• Placement in this section is free of charge, as room permits. Send all pictures/information to: **Modeler's Resource®, Attn: Strange,** 4120 Douglas Blvd, #306-372, Granite Bay, CA 95746-5936

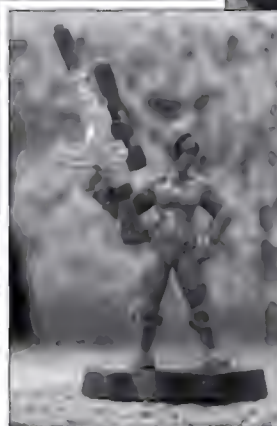
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I-Kore...

is presenting some miniature gaming figures which, in my opinion, could easily be included in small scale dioramas. These figures are for the VOID™ Battles with Miniatures game and there are a multitude of figures and accessories including gun placements, bridges, figures, dragons and all manner of beasts as well as their own set of Starter Paints. This paint set includes 24 4 ml pots of acrylic paint and five paintbrushes, sizes 3, 2, 1, 0 and 000.

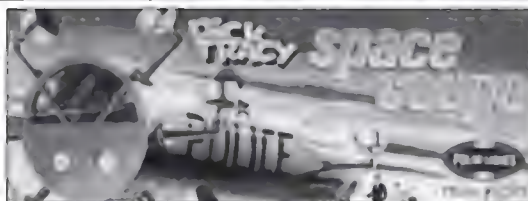
For more information on their full line of products, please feel free to contact them via the Internet at: www.i-Kore.com or via snail mail to: **i-Kore Ltd, 55 Bangor Road, Edinburgh, EH6 5JX, United Kingdom.**



Polar Lights...

Steps up to the modeling plate with this new, fully licensed **Mystery Machine** from the Scooby-Doo on Cartoon Network™ in 1:24 scale.

This is a snap-kit (Level 1) and comes molded in green, with sticker



decals for the vehicle.

Also includes figures of Shaggy and Scooby-Doo ready for their next mystery adventure! This is a Wal-Mart™ exclusive, so get 'em now baby!

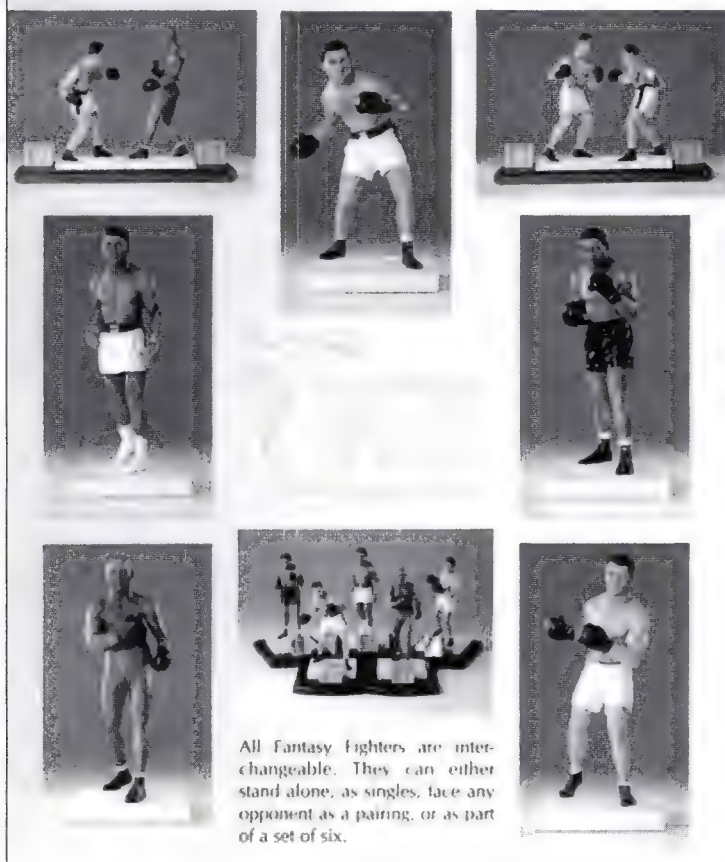
Also now available is the Dick Tracy Space Coupe, originally released from Aurora years ago. Highly sought after, this kit is sure to bring back those high-flying, comic book memories. Like the Mystery Machine, Dick Tracy's Space Coupe is injection-molded in plastic containing over 40 parts, including three figures and moon base.

Wonder Models...

Bob Wallets, the force behind the now defunct Supporting Castings, is now back with his new company, Wonder Models. Wonder Models is now the owner of the previously produced, Mr. Sardonicus kit, formerly from Mental Mischief, and the new Peter Cushing kit, which were both sculpted by Gabriel Garcia.

Wonder Models' next release is The Las Vegas Vampire, of Janos Skorzeny from The Night Stalker. Look for it to be available by the time of this issue's release. All Wonder Models' kits are available from Vampir Unlimited in NY and selected hobby stores.

FANTASY FIGHTS *in Miniature*

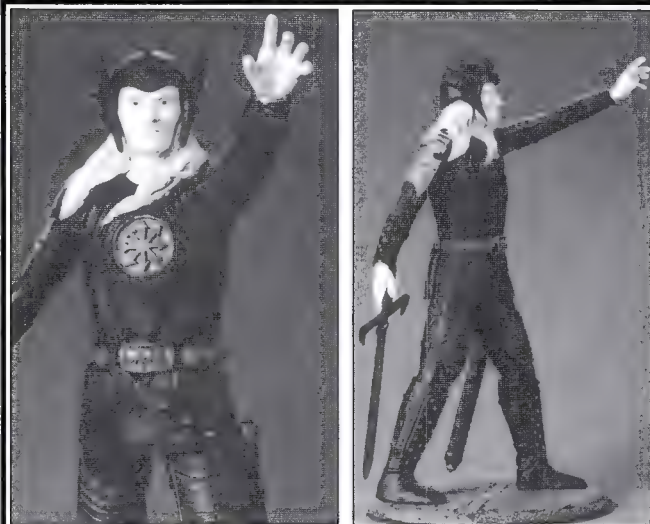


All Fantasy Fighters are interchangeable. They can either stand alone, as singles, face any opponent as a pairing, or as part of a set of six.

Fantasy Fights miniatures...

presents pre-painted boxer figures ranging from 1/8 to 1/10 scale. The company also sells quite a few kits. Check out their web page to find out more.

Their contact info is: **N+T Productions**, 19 Marina Drive, South Shields, Tyne & Wear, NE33 2NH ENGLAND. Owner: Trevor Dixon-Cave, Phone: + 44 (0) 191 4563741 Internet: www.nt-productions.com



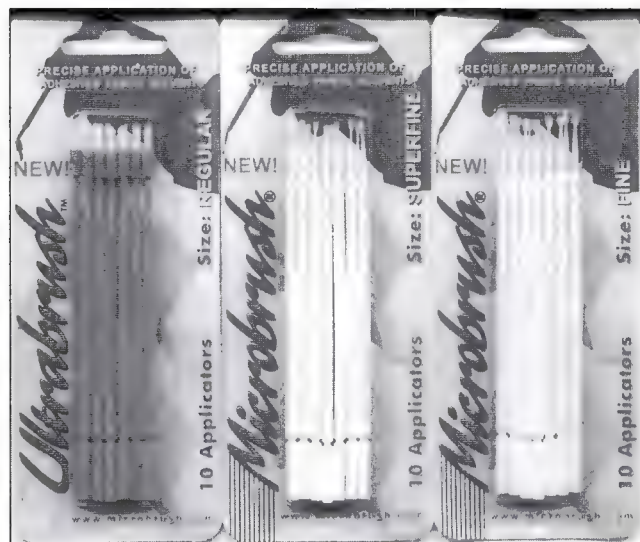
Blix Studios...

has a new resin kit available called, "Prince of Chaos" and is based on the albino warrior Elric and his black sword, Stormbringer. Kit is a 1/6 scale (13" tall) and comes in nine separate pieces. Sculpted by John Guenther, model is priced at \$85.00 plus \$7.50 s/h (U.S.). Anyone interested can contact: **Blix Studios**, 1027 Ontario St, Apt #1, Port Huron, MI 48060, or phone 810.984.5378 • E-mail: BlixStudios@webtv.net • <http://community-2.webtv.net/blix-studios/BLIXSTUDIOS>

Microbrushes@...

is offering three new products to compliment their current line of applicators. These new Microbrushes come in Superfine, Fine and Regular sizes and include 10 applicators per package. These applicators bend easily to any angle for the placement of small, controlled amounts of material in areas of limited access. Great for applying glues and paints and can be used with most solvents.

You can find out more about their full line by logging onto the Internet at: www.microbrush.com or checking with your local hobby or craft shop.



Medea-Iwata...

has a few new products that you may find to your liking.

The Medea Airbrush Cleaner is ready-to-use and is fast acting, odorless and environmentally safe. This is the perfect product for your new Iwata airbrush that you just added to your arsenal.

Also available is Medea's Super Lube, a non-toxic product that contains no petroleum or silicone additives. It can be used on all moving parts of your airbrush and will not affect or react with any water, lacquer or enamel-based paints. Use it on a regular basis to keep your needle and trigger from sticking or bending.

To find out more about Medea-Iwata airbrushes and products, log onto the following Internet sites (or your local hobby shop or art store):

<http://www.medeia-artool.com/iwata.htm> or <http://www.medeia-artool.com/medeia.htm>

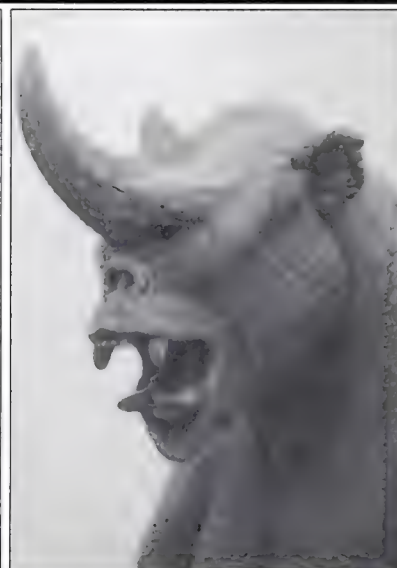




Mick Wood...

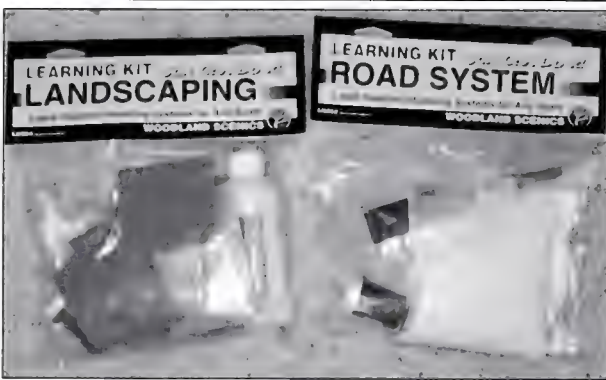
is announcing his newest prehistoric kit, called "Bearnocerus." A creation of Mick's, this will be released as a limited edition of only fifty. Each kit will include a signed certificate of authenticity and the kit itself, when built, stands about 15½" tall. Cost of this prehistoric beastly is \$165.00 plus \$10.00 s/h.

If you'd like to order one, contact: **Mick Wood, 584 Sturgeon Dr, Akron OH 44319-4312, Tel: 330.645.9844.**



Revell-Monogram...

has some new additions to their RAMS (Rebuildable Action Model System) line. Up first, on the left is the Vicious Cycle™, made up of 12 parts which are usable in a variety of ways. All-Terrain Pain™ with 19 parts and is also rebuildable. Both kits include figures and are a Skill 1 for ages 6+. The third vehicle shown is the Smart Car and comes with Revell's ProFinish™. This car is also a SnapTite® assembly which needs no painting or gluing. This model is based on the MCC Smart Car which is one of the smallest cars on earth, yet it offers the crash protection of a full-size car. Model includes 54 pieces in a variety of color schemes. These vehicles should be available at your favorite hobby or retail outlet, wherever fine models are sold.



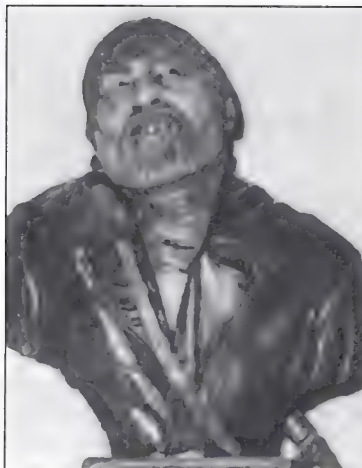
Learning Kit Systems...

from Woodland Scenics! Check them out. These are smaller packets of what you need to create roadways in the Road System or add to your model with a diorama (Landscaping). Check with your local hobby or railroad shop for these and other fine products from the folks at Woodland Scenics or go on-line: www.woodlandscenics.com

Budgies Kits...

has two new busts ready to go. The Fluteplayer (near right) is a 1:4 scale, six inch high bust, cast in four pieces of cold-cast resin and includes nameplate. Dr. Price is also 1:4 scale and six inches tall. This bust is cast in one piece cold-cast resin. Cost is £35.00 which includes shipping worldwide. For more information, contact:

Budgies Kits, Tel: 44 (0) 1295 276461 • E-mail: martin@budgiecage.demon.co.uk



AT THE NEWSSTAND



Historical Miniature #27 (Nov/Dec 2000)

If any part of your love for modeling extends to the historical miniature area, then you'll want to check out this particular magazine. Ron Sousa's publication has been around for nearly five years and each issue boasts an armload of material that offers insights into techniques with which you may not be familiar with.

This particular issue includes a number of articles that we figure modelers can gain insight from reading. Mike Blank offers tips on painting a Viking Hersir (90mm) of the 8th Century. This article includes many quality, color photos.

Bob Knee (author of *Color Theory and Application*) spends a good deal of time addressing the concept of painting eyes. While this article includes many black and white drawings that are extremely helpful, at first glance it might be thought, well, why aren't there any color photos of this process? That's not the author's purpose because his intent is to break down the areas of the eyes so that the reader/modeler gains insight into where to place the highlights, how to line up the eyes when painting so that they look natural and how to achieve the desired affect you're after when painting eyes. This is an excellent article and one that well suits those of us who routinely paint figures.

There are a number of show articles included in this issue which are always a good deal of fun because I really enjoy seeing what other modelers around the world are accomplishing. Model shows from Wellington, New Zealand and Cuneo, Italy are included.

The cover price is \$8.50/U.S. and if you are interested in HM, their contact information is: R & K Productions, 31316 Via Colinas Unit 105, Westlake Village CA 91362 Tel: 818.991.9044 • Fax: 818.991.9585 • E-mail: rkprod@earthlink.net.

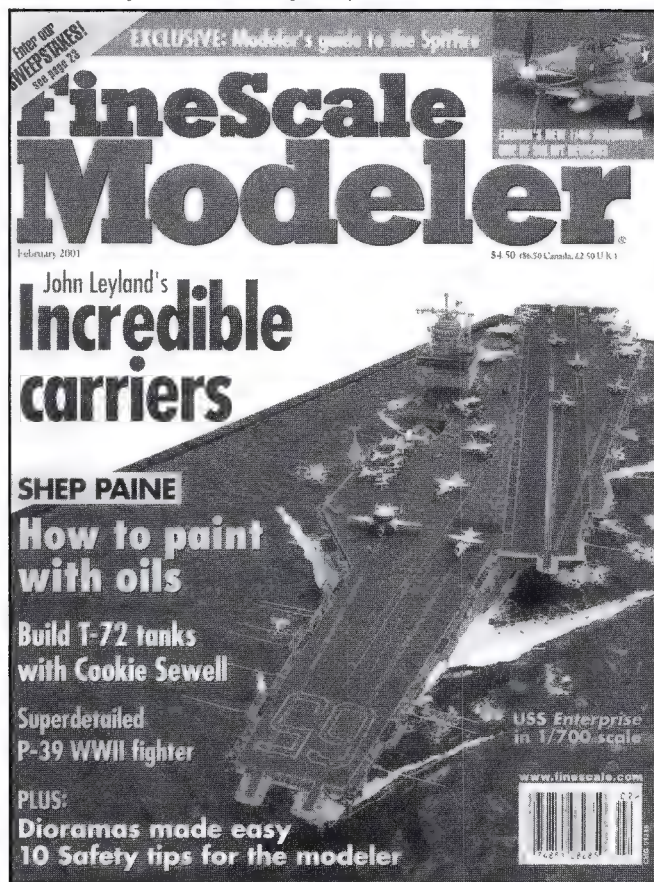
FineScale Modeler (February 2001)

There are a number of great articles within this issue of FSM, most notably, Kerry Moncrieff's "Dioramas Made Easy" which details how to put your models in a realistic setting. He destroys a building, creates the ground, makes tracks and gravel and a variety of things which all help create the realism we strive for in our models.

Another article that is well worth the read is by Shep Paine titled, "How to Use Artist's Oils." He talks about controlling the paint, underpainting, laying in the colors, blending and more. Very worthwhile, especially if you've ever considered branching out to include oils in your painting.

Skipping past all the planes and tanks (not that there's anything *wrong* with those!), one other article I enjoyed, by Elizabeth Lamb, was "Ten Tips for Safer Modeling." What's funny about this article is that most of us, if push came to shove, would be able to relate most of these common sense dictums, BUT, how many of us actually follow them?! Read it. It's good for your health.

FSM's "Questions & Answers" is also a good read. Check them out at your local hobby shop or: www.finescale.com

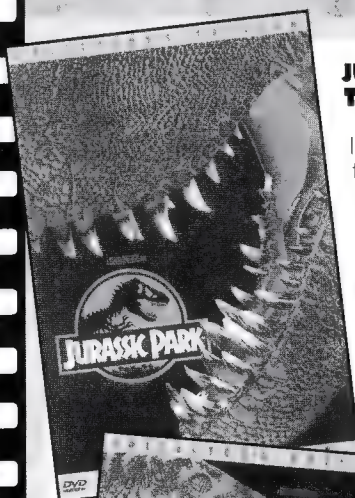




THE SIGHTS & SOUNDS OF MODELING!

with Bill Craft

Welcome back to the wonderful world of films on DVD and the music from those films on CD that have influenced the model kit world.



JURASSIC PARK 1993
THE LOST WORLD 1997 Universal Home Video

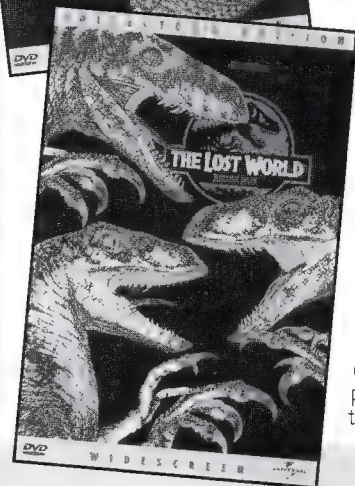
I suppose you could say that "Jurassic Park" broke the ground for all the wonderful CGI inspired monster movies that we enjoy today. Even though the film contains only a few minutes of actual CGI work, it has inspired such present-day dino films like, Disney's "Dinosaur" which contains about 90 minutes of CGI animation. Time sure does fly when it comes to this kind of technology.

Anyway, these two films, which may lack in the script area, more than make up the problem in the effects area. The CGI, combined with life size animatronics, are the star attractions for both of these films.

It is good to note that Steven Spielberg has finally greenlighted his films for DVD release. He was holding us all for ransom for awhile there.

The two films look wonderful and sound awesome when piped through a 5.1 surround sound system. The two discs are packed with added features such as "making of's," interviews, story boards etc. Bravo, I say! Go out and get these now if you don't already have 'em. These disks are sold separately or as a deluxe boxed set with other goodies inside.

The famous Horizon T-Rex is perhaps the most sought after kit these days among the many dino kits that derived from these two films. Ah, but Jurassic Park 3 is in production now. What will us mere modelers get out of that one? Time will tell.



TERMINATOR 2 JUDGEMENT DAY
1991 Artisan Home Entertainment

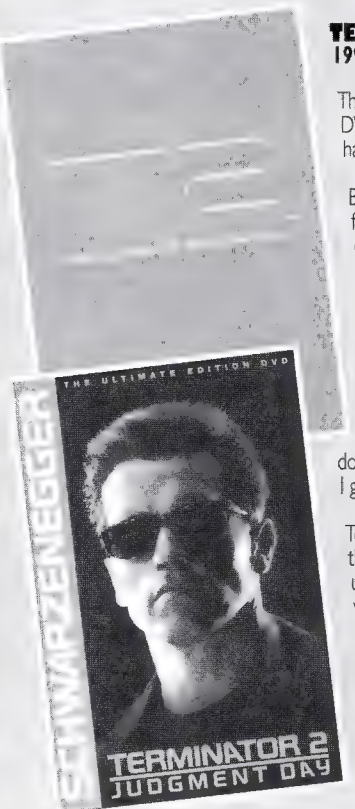
This has to be the last word in DVD excitement. If all DVD features were produced like this, then I would be a happy beast indeed.

Besides the widescreen special edition version of the film, you have over 40 extra features. These additions cover every aspect of the film from it's conception to the T23-D live show. The disk boasts 6 hours of content. I can believe it. It took several nights to get through it all. A metal slipcase and 32-page booklet are also included. A true "must have" item.

The film is remastered in THX for that great sound experience. Enough praise cannot be said about this disk, especially when some of the major studios are doing away with this kind of extra material. Too bad for us. I guess the studios are crying poor again.

Terminator-related model kits have been with us since the dawn of garage kits. Not just the main character figures. Futuristic skynet vehicles and flying machines as well as hardware have landed upon our modeling tables.

This is one of those films that constantly stir the imagination of modelers and with the announced, third installment into the film series, I am sure even more exciting kits will grace our hobby rooms.



GORG0
1961
VCI Home Video

One of the best men-in-monster-suits-movies not made in Japan. In fact, the film production was British and had the beastie and it's big angry mother destroying London.

I have seen many versions of this film and I must say for the record, that the film has never looked as good as it does on this disc. It is presented in widescreen with a mini documentary which I had never seen before, as well as the original theatrical trailer and a neat photo gallery. For a film this old, it is good that it is now preserved for us to view a hundredfold if we wish, without any further degradation.

Gorgo kits spring up from time to time to enlighten us and keep reminding us of giant monster movie days at the theatre, long gone.



DVD HALL OF FAME!
DEDICATED TO PAST RELEASES THAT HAVE INFLUENCED MODELING!

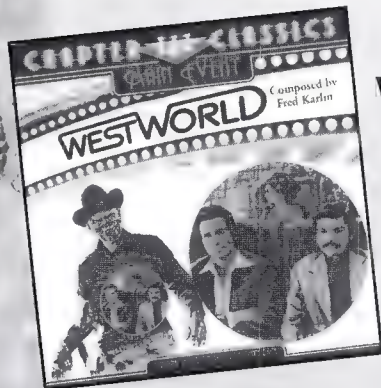


THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN 1935
Universal Home Video

The granddaddy of all monster movies received the royal treatment on this DVD. An original documentary on the making of this creature classic, as well as a commentary by film historian, Scott MacQueen, is included.

You would need a huge room to accommodate all the kits based, not only on Boris Karloff's "Monster," but Elsa Lanchester's "Bride," Colin Clive's "Dr. Frankenstein," and Ernest Thesiger's "Dr. Pretorius."

No monster fan should be without this.



WESTWORLD

by Fred Karlin

Label: Chapter III Classics

12 Tracks. Over 32 minutes of music

This was one of my favorite films of the 1970s. A futuristic amusement park with lifelike interacting robots for the ultimate vacation of a lifetime. That is, until things start going wrong. I particularly enjoyed how Mr. Karlin blended western and sci-fi themes together to create an eerie "other world" sound. The music where the gun slinger, played by Yul Brenner, is chasing after Richard Benjamin is the best example of this.

A foldout booklet is included with liner notes about the film and Mr. Karlin.

There have been several kits based on Mr. Brenner's gunslinger character from this film.



GODZILLA X MEGAGUIRUS

by Michiru Ohshima

Import label: Victor Entertainment

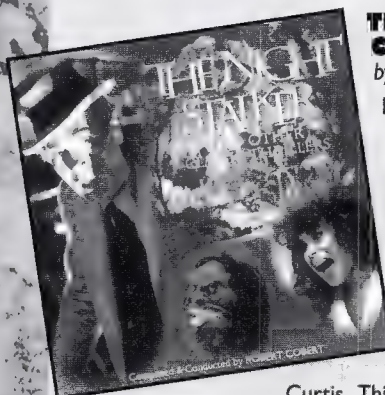
35 tracks with the obligatory sound effects at the end.

After the rather disappointing score for Godzilla 2000, the powers that be at Toho studios are on the right track again. The action music for "Godzilla X Megaguirus," although not the traditional music we have become accustomed to, is very fresh. There is indeed an ominous tone to it. While I will always enjoy the old themes of Zilla movies from the past, I welcome the new direction that the music is going. I can only hope that new themes can evolve from the new series of films and one day be the norm for the new Zilla adventures that can separate them from the music of the past.

All this aside, Zilla fans can rejoice at this release. From heroic marches to thunderous death rattles, this one has it. Let's hope the tradition continues with the next entry into the series. A tall order indeed.

A colorful, 12-page booklet, with many color and black and white stills, is included. The text is in Japanese, however. Ah, but who needs to read it anyway.

Rest assured that the kits and action figures are either in progress or already upon us. Great Kaiju model-building music.



THE NIGHT STALKER AND OTHER CLASSIC THRILLERS

by Robert Cobert

Label: Varese Saraband

10 suites. Over 76 minutes of music

I have been waiting for a collection like this for years. Known mostly for his work on the daytime soap opera "Dark Shadows," composer Robert Cobert has scored some other memorable films you may remember. Included in this CD are cues from, "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde," "The Night Stalker," "Trilogy of Terror," "Curse of the Black Widow," "Dracula" with Jack Palance and more. The music of Mr. Cobert is unmistakable. I can tell his style a mile away.

An eight-page booklet with stills and a bio of Mr. Cobert are included as well as a note from longtime associate, Dan

Curtis. This is a "must" addition to any collection of classic genre music.

There is a wealth of kits based on some of these movies. Most noteworthy, the Zuni terror doll from "Trilogy of Terror." I must have built a dozen of them myself for collectors.



MILLENNIUM GODZILLA BEST

by Akira Ifukube

Import label: TYCY

30 tracks. Over 70 minutes of music

This newly remastered CD plays out like a greatest hits of master Kaiju composer, Akira Ifukube. Since most of the CDs of Mr. Ifukube's monster music are long out of production, this is a worthwhile, "got to have it." It would seem that once a disk has been pressed in Japan, that is it. Once it has sold out, it is gone. They don't repress their discs.

Included on this disk are cues from many of the composer's most memorable monster rallies, including the original 1954 Godzilla, Rodan, The Mysterians, Varan, Antragon, Frankenstein Conquers the World, War of the Gargantuas and more.

The sound on this CD is crisp and clear.

A fact filled 14-page booklet covering the 12 films is included. I assume it is facts since the text is once again in Japanese. It's the music that is important after all.

Model kits based on the monsters from these films are everywhere. Track down this import from your Zilla supplier. You will not be disappointed.

CD HALL OF FAME!

DEDICATED TO PAST RELEASES THAT HAVE INFLUENCED MODELING!



THE BEST OF GODZILLA 1954-1975

THE BEST OF GODZILLA 1984-1995

Various composers including Akira Ifukube and Masaru Satoh
GNP CRESCENDO RECORDS

Since I have a Japanese monster theme working on this page, I might as well continue with this great collection. Are you ready for this? Both of these CDs combine for over two and one-half hours of Kaiju monster music mayhem.

These are selected cue CDs that cover the Godzilla movies from the original "Godzilla" in 1954, to "Godzilla vs. Destroyah" in 1995. The best thing about all this is that these are licensed American CDs. As I stated in the other "Ifukube" review, it is very difficult to obtain the original individual Japanese CDs now. So here, at least, we have what I like to refer to as a "greatest hits extravaganza." Each film in the entire Zilla series is presented in order of their release, with a few cuts from each of the films. Minus of course, since this pressing was 3 years ago, are the two newest entries, "Godzilla 2000" and "Godzilla X Megaguirus."

One can listen in chronological order just how the music for these films changed with each succeeding film, as the mood of the times dictated. Through the glory days in the late 50s, to the decline in budgets in the late 70s, to the resurrection of the genre in the mid 80's and onward towards the recaptured glory years of the early- and mid-90s.

Military marches and monster rumble cues abound that no self-respecting music fan should be without.

Each CD comes with an eight-page booklet with full color Japanese 1 sheet reproductions and stills.

NEXT ISSUE! Be here for more exciting DVDs and soundtrack CDs that have influenced our entire modeling experience!



SHOWTIME!

Show Promoters: Please feel free to fax or mail us information about your upcoming event and we'll post it here. Thanks! As room permits, information is placed on a "first come, first-served" basis. Contact information: Modeler's Resource, Showtime!, 4120 Douglas Blvd, #306-372, Granite Bay, CA 95746-5936 Fax: 916.784.8384 e-mail: modres@quiknet.com. *Information as published was submitted by the entity involved and if there are any discrepancies or inaccuracies, please contact that specific group or organization for clarification and/or correction. Modeler's Resource would request the individual submitting organization then notify Modeler's Resource of any corrections and/or changes they deem appropriate. We would then be pleased to publish any copy correction or adjustments.*

March - 2001:

• SCAHMS:

Southern California Area Historical Miniature Society presents its 2001 show, **Saturday and Sunday, March 17 - 18, 2001** at the Doubletree Hotel, 3050 Bristol St, Costa Mesa, CA. For reservations, call: 714.540.7000 Ext: 4200. For more show info, contact: James R Hill, Tel: 714.526.9339 E-mail: j1776h@aol.com

• Knoxville Scale Modelers:

March 17, 2001, at the Holiday Inn Select, Worlds Fair Park, Knoxville, TN Contact Info: David Lakin (Local President) 7417 Praise Lane, Knoxville, TN 37918 E-mail: david_noki@yahoo.com; Tel: (865) 925-4148

• Tulsa Modelers Forum:

will hold its 14th annual contest on **Saturday, March 24, 2001**. The location will be at the Salvation Army Community Center, 1721 S. Hickory, Sapulpa, Oklahoma For more information call: Scale Model Hobby Center, Tel: (918) 610-0799, Frank Koons Tel: (918) 828-2434 or (918) 828-1509; e-mail fkoons50@postoffice.swbell.net.

April:

• Pensacola Inaugural Model Figure Contest:

Panhandle Miniature Figure Society presents the **Pensacola Inaugural Model Figure Contest, April 21, 2001**. For information contact: Scott C. Sheltz, P.O. Box 9431, Hurlburt Field, Florida 32544, or e-mail; admin@master-works.net, or www.master-works.net

• Annual IPMS/ Chuck Yeager Model Show and Contest:

April 21, 2001 at Mercy Baptist Hall, Pennsylvania Ave, Weirton WV. For more info, contact: Don Ference, 150 Lincoln Place Follansbee, WV 26037-1916; Tel: 304-527-4641, or E-mail: dference811@cs.com

• Chiller Theatre:

You've heard of this mega-event. Multiple times a year. Catch it this coming **April - Sheraton Meadowlands Plaza, East Rutherford, NJ**. The walking zombies, model kits, scream queens, contests, film screenings, autograph sessions and everything else you've come to know and love will all be on hand! Call the Chiller Hotline at 201.457.1991 for updated show information and guest lineup. Check them out on-line at: <http://chillertheatre.com/>

May:

• Hoosier Model Car Association:

presents their 21st Annual Swap Meet and Model Car Contest on **May 5, 2001** at the St. Roch Religious Education Center, 3600 South Pennsylvania St, Indianapolis IN. Event takes place from 9AM to 4PM. Tables \$25.00. Admission: \$2.00. Special contest theme this year: "2001 - Space Oddities" (Futuristic automotive vehicles from any era). For more information, send SASE to: HMCA, 1019 N Tuxedo St, Indianapolis IN 46201 or call: 317.264.9387.

• 6th Annual Verona Model Show & Contest:

presented by Mad City Modelers. **May 19th** at Verona Middle School, Hwy M, Verona, WI. Contest begins with registration **Saturday, May 19th, 8am to 12noon**. For more info, contact Jim Turek, 2639 Country View Ct, Monroe, WI 53566, or E-mail at: jamesturek@earthlink.net • Tel: 608.329.7222

• Rocky Mountain Model Club

7th Annual Contest & Show - 2001 A modeling Odyssey, **Saturday, May 12, 2001** at: Sandstone Valley Ecumenical Centre, 1100 Berkshire Blvd. NW, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. For info. visit www.rockymountainmodelclub.com

July:

• A Modeler's Odyssey:

The IPMS/Chicago chapter is proud to be hosting the 2001 National Convention in Chicago, **July 4th - 7th, 2001** at the Hyatt Regency 'O'Hare, 9300 West Bryn Mawr Ave, Rosemont, IL 60018. For more information, contact: IPMS/USA 2001 National Convention P.O. Box 377, Hazel Crest, IL 60429-0377. General Convention Information: Joseph Schock <agnot@mc.net>; General Information: Jack Bruno <BustoffRC@aol.com> (Trophy Sponsorship); Contest Information: Edward Nowak <FOKKERNUT@aol.com>; Registration Information: Ed Wahl <ewahl@kiwi.dep.anl.gov>; Vendor Information and Sales: Marty or Mary Jurasek <mmodels@wwa.com>, or check them out on the Internet at: <http://www.geocities.com/ipmsusa2001/>

August:

• Imagine Nation Expo:

T.C.B. Inc. is proud to announce The Imagine Nation Expo 2001. A Figure Model Kit - FX Experience to be held at the Orleans Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada **August 3, 4 & 5, 2001**. Sponsors include: Amazing Figure Modeler, GEOMETRIC Design, Conte Collectibles and more to be announced. The 1st Annual "Bob Burns" model contest with over \$2,500 in cash prizes. Seminars and demonstrations on painting and sculpting with Q & A sessions. This show is being brought to you by the Creative Minds at: Monster Cellar, Taylor Design, Dark Carnival & Amok Time. Any questions or dealer inquiries please call 310-378-7920 or check out: www.imagenationexpo.com

• Bournemouth Model Spectacular

August 11th, 12th 2001. The south of England Scale Modelling Showcase at the Bournemouth Pavilion, Westover Road, Bournemouth. Model Clubs and Traders warmly invited to this the second show at Bournemouth. To apply for stands, please contact: John Bothamley, 9 Heather Close, Throop, Bournemouth BH8 0ER Tel: 01202 527 723 or Brian Bisp, Tel: 01202 743 465 Fax: 01202 718 488; E-mail brian@bournemouthmodelspectacular.co.uk General details appear on the show web site: www.bournemouthmodelspectacular.co.uk

October:

• DRONE-A-RAMA:

Stay tuned for more information on this event held in the United Kingdom or visit their site at: www.dronemagftvmc.com



WITH BILL MAYO

The L.E.D. Mirage is a flagship machine of Mamoru Nagano's manga-based universe, "Five Star Stories." Five Star is a convoluted tale, but a blessed change from the usual Japanese "Big Machine" fare. In Nagano's world, people actually grow up. Garage kit mainstay, Wave, is new to styrene kits. This Boomerang Mirage represents their most ambitious project to date. This model combines the previously released 1/100 Mirage and Flame Launcher accessory kit and adds a vinyl cast flight pack. The box art is very impressive as is the part count - 340+ pieces! Parts are flash free, crisp and clean. The vinyl "Boom" section has limited surface blemishes. A metal base and decal sheet round out the kit.

Instructions:

The 30-page instruction booklet features exploded construction diagrams and generous illustrations. As this is a Japanese kit designed for a Japanese audience, I'm grateful Wave included a numbering system on the part trees that's easy enough to follow. It works just fine until you get to the decal application, at which point, things get a little vague.

Construction:

Building the Mirage without the flight pack is a breeze. The Flame Launcher (weapon) and shield (or Veil) tend to balance the Mirage and allow it to stand without being pinned to the base. Adding the massive Flame Launcher Generator and Flight Pack called for some engineering skills. Thankfully, I planned ahead for the additional weight and beefed up the chest section and lower torso with a generous helping of Pacer Z-Poxy.

First, I trimmed all the vinyl parts. I'm used to vinyl cast fig-



ures, so this industrial strength "mecha" vinyl was a new challenge. A hair dryer, fresh hobby blades and something to keep your fingers from ending up on the floor are highly recommended. In my case, I finally wrapped duct tape around my left thumb and fingers (I'm right-handed) after a couple of near misses. The dome section of the top wing requires special trimming, so please eyeball the instructions. If you're a "natural born modeler" like me and only refer to the instructions after you screw up, you might want to break that habit with this kit. It's a handful. Forward planning on the backpack assembly will pay off later. I took a bit of a gamble and built the complete backpack before painting. After filling it with carpenter's foam, I wanted to get the vinyl and styrene pieces properly mated up and reinforced. As you can imagine, this created some headaches later on in the paint booth, but allowed me the chance to get plenty of A + B putty and glue in the proper places. Once it was all together, sealed up and primed, some careful masking and blending with the airbrush had it looking



*It was forty years ago today,
Aurora sent some monsters out to play,
They've been hanging 'round for quite a while
And they never did go out of style.
Now they're with an all new brand,
Polar Lights sends them across the land.
So, let's re-introduce to you
Some kits that are both old and new...
They're Sgt. Polar's Plastic Hearts Club Band.
(With apologies to Lennon & McCartney)*

According to the book, Greenburg's Guide to Aurora Model Kits, by Thomas Graham, it was at the 1960 New York Toy Fair where Aurora first showed its prototype for the Frankenstein figure kit. The lone monster had been ignored for most of the time, but when two eager youngsters (accompanied by their father, a Hobby Shop owner) zeroed in on that one figure, forsaking all the slot cars and other items Aurora had on display,

It's All Plastic To Me

the Aurora sales team knew they were onto something. The following year when the kit hit the shelves across the country, Aurora had to make duplicate tooling and run their injection-molding machines around the clock to keep up with demand. The Frankenstein kit was followed quickly by an entire line of monsters and the rest, as they say, is history.

Now on the Fortieth Anniversary of that first Aurora monster kit, builders of plastic models have a wide range of injection-molded kits to keep their creative juices flowing; thanks to the folks who have picked up the Aurora torch and carried it into the new century, Polar Lights. What the heck does all this have to do with that wacky-looking Sgt. Polar diorama? Well, that diorama is a tribute not only to forty years of Aurora monster kits, it's also a salute to the rightful heir to the Aurora plastic throne, Polar Lights. If you'll just sit quietly, I'll tell you how the whole thing came about...

When I first got the assignment to build the four new Polar Lights Beatles kits, I wracked my brain trying to come up with a way to make an interesting diorama with the four figures. At first I thought I'd add the recently reissued Ertl Yellow Submarine to the piece as a bit of background and perhaps recreate a scene from the film. However, when I went to rent Yellow Submarine at my local chain video store (which will remain nameless, but it was the biggest video store on the block, buster) I was told that the video of Yellow Submarine was unavailable because it is the "most stolen" video in the store and therefore they no longer carry it. Despondent, I returned to my brain wracking, trying to come up with an interesting idea for the diorama that I could do without reference material. Then, inspiration struck in the form of Fred DeRuvo, our fearless leader. He called to ask if I had a copy of the Sgt. Pepper album that we could use to help illustrate the Beatles article. That was all I needed to hear.

I decided to recreate the Sgt. Pepper album cover using the



with Jim Bertges





Beatles kits as the centerpiece and populating the background with every other figure kit Polar Lights has released to date. It sounds rather simple when it's all written out like that, doesn't it? Well, the concept is simple, but the execution would be another matter entirely. How was I going to get a copies of all the Polar Lights kits, build and paint them and line them up in a setting that resembles a class photo? The conflicting scales and body configurations would make the setup physically impossible, or at least quite messy. That's when inspiration struck again (and it's starting to build up quite a bruise). I realized that I could create the "class photo" background the same way it had been done on the album cover, by using photo cutouts. And where, you might ask, did I plan on getting pictures of all those kits? That's where I called on a little help from my friends.

Like any thoroughly modern company, Polar Lights has a web site. It's a part of the corporate Playing Mantis site along with Johnny Lightning and other products that Playing Mantis makes. Attached to that web site is a Bulletin Board that functions a big group discussion area for fans of the Polar Lights kits. It's a very friendly place for talking about Polar Lights kits and other related topics. Because there are moderators for the Bulletin Board, things like insults and name-calling are not tolerated and it creates a very family-like atmosphere. I often go there and put in my opinions or comments when I feel I have something interesting to say. So, I asked my buddies and fellow Polar Lights fans to help me out with this project, but I didn't tell them exactly what they were helping me with. I asked them to e-mail me head and shoulders photos of their built-up Polar Lights kits and I got a terrific response. At that time, several of the kits I wanted to include in my background collage hadn't yet hit the store shelves, so the kind folks at Polar Lights provided photos of their factory finished kits for the project. When I finally cajoled everyone into sending me the pictures I needed, the next step was to convert them from electronic images into real, physical pictures I could cut out and glue to something. That's where my good friend Bill Craft came in.

Aside from being the modeling genius he is, Bill is also quite an expert when it comes to computer graphics. I provided Bill with the photo files I had collected from all my various sources and Bill provided me with beautiful, full color printouts of all the pictures. We decided for uniformity's sake that in the prints he made, all the models' heads should be about one inch in width. This was based on my measurement of the width of the head from Polar Lights' George kit. (As you may or may not know, George is often referred to as the "large headed" Beatle, so I felt it was safe to use him as a standard to go by.) Most of the shots we used were head and shoulders views of the kits, since the majority of them would be in the back rows of the diorama, but we also decided

that the original "big four" monster kits should occupy the front row, flanking the Beatles. So, Bill provided full body prints of Frankenstein, Dracula, The Wolf Man and The Mummy to take places of honor in the front row. With all my prints in hand, my work was cut out for me. Well, actually, my work was cutting out.

Each individual monster, fiend, creature, hero and rock star had to be cut out by hand with my trusty hobby knife. I'm proud to say that no blood was drawn, no fingers were nicked and there was no cursing during the entire process. Once this part of the

• Continued Next Page •



cutting was done, all the cutouts were laid out, arranged and rearranged and moved around until I had all the rows set up the way I liked them. It was an interesting experience seeing who fit next to whom and who would overlap and checking all the various ways the whole thing could be set up. Pleased with my arrangement, I placed the cutouts on sheets of black foam-core and outlined them in pencil. Foam-core is interesting stuff, it's basically a piece of dense styrofoam sandwiched between two sheets of posterboard and it cuts pretty easily with a sharp hobby knife. That was my next step. I cut out all the pencilled outlines, leaving the silhouettes of the figures carved in the foam-core. Using a can of spray mount adhesive, I attached each cutout in its proper place and stepped back to admire my work. I had to be particularly careful of how each row interacted with the row behind it so that nobody was blocked too badly and that the fact that only head and shoulders shots were used wasn't revealed. In a couple of spots I had to extend the cutouts beyond their borders by painting in more body by hand. Of course, the whole thing had to be compatible with the four Beatles kits and since I had assembled and painted them first, they were there every step of the way.

The assembly and painting of the Beatles themselves were pretty simple and fun. The psychedelic/cartoon nature of the models called for lots of bright, interesting colors that aren't usually used on a figure kit. There were a couple of tricky spots, but using Tenax or a similar liquid cement assembly went quickly and seams were easy to handle. It was during the painting stages where some difficulties arose. Both George and Ringo have torso assemblies that fit around the leg assemblies, so painting their coats as a single unit was not possible. I had to first paint both halves of the coats, then attach them to the assembled and painted leg section, then take care of the seams and finally touch up the paint along the seam line very carefully. Another complication lay in painting the two colored stripes down the sides of both John's and Ringo's pants. This was a matter of masking and painting lines that were no more than an eighth of an inch wide. It took several trials and a whole bunch of errors before everything was masked and painted properly. Finally, I found that when painting bright colors over a black base, like Paul's coat, it helps if you first undercoat the area with white. That small step really saves on the effort of painting an area over and over until the colors build up the proper brightness. Each Beatle comes with an extra head, which is called his "disguise" head. These represent the disguises they wore in the movie when they became Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. In addition, George comes with a little cartoon dog and Paul is accompanied by the famed Sgt. Pepper bass drum, which has the Sgt. Pepper logo, embossed into it.

So, with the Beatles assembled and all the cutouts glued in their proper positions, all that remained to do was the final assembly of the diorama. I started with a two foot by two foot frame con-

taining a sheet of Plexiglas and I sprayed the whole thing flat black. I cut two inch strips of foam core to go between the rows of cutouts, in order to give a more dimensional look and it leaves a bit of space, just in case I want to add other pictures in the future. I also cut two more two-inch strips of foam core which were notched. Matching notches were cut into the middle and back rows of cut outs and the whole thing fit together like a huge puzzle. I used hot glue to hold everything together and to attach the front row of cutouts to the support pieces. I left a gap in the front row where the Beatles were to fit in, but because of the poses of the kits, they wouldn't all fit side by side in that space. I put George and Ringo in the two inch space between the first and second rows (I had to figure out where George would go far in advance because of that dang big tuba he carries), then I positioned John and Paul out in front, but not totally blocking anyone else. The foreground of the piece needed dressing, so in keeping with the Aurora/Polar Lights theme, I added several pieces from the Customizing Monster Kits. There's the vulture, the mad dog, the big spider, lizard, headstones and a couple of skulls. Also, to represent one of the kits that didn't make it into the background, I added the Eddie Munster figure from the Munster's Living Room kit. The last two cutouts were representatives of the Monster Rod kits-The Wolf Man's Wagon and King Kong's Thronester. Finally, I created a special graphic on my computer to grace the bass drum so everyone would know the name of this motley gang of plastic creations. They're Sgt. Polar's Plastic Hearts Club Band!

This piece was a lot of fun to plan and put together, but I couldn't have done it without a lot of help from a great bunch of folks. First, from the Polar Lights Bulletin Board, the following people contributed pictures of their kits: Mark Frengel, Lost In Space Robot & Dr. Smith; Brent Gair, Lost In Space Cyclops; Kim "Buc" Wheat, James Bond; Mike Gilbert, Odd Job; Mark Chan, Frankenstein, Bride of Frankenstein & "Bellringer"; Scott Beckman, The Creature From the Black Lagoon & The Three Stooges; Mark Dean, The Mummy; Jerry Gustavson, The Witch; Lisa Greco, The "New" Wolf Man; "Model Man", The "New" Phantom & Kiss; Chuck Hroch, Robby; Chris White, The "New" Mummy; Alec Hosterman, Dick Tracy; Jeff "Mango Man" Alger, Headless Horseman; Dave "Yamahog" Potter, Yama's Hog; Rachel DeRuvo, Crash Bandicoot; and the PR department at Polar Lights, Ursus, Ziaus, Cornelius, Zira, Michael Myers & Drej Alien.

Of course I couldn't let this opportunity go without my own participation, so I included my Dracula and Wolf Man. Not only did the fabulous Bill Craft provide all the computer printouts of these kits, he also contributed pictures of his fantastic buildups of Godzilla, Gidorah, Rodan & King Kong. Thanks to all of you for your kind assistance; I would have been lost without you.

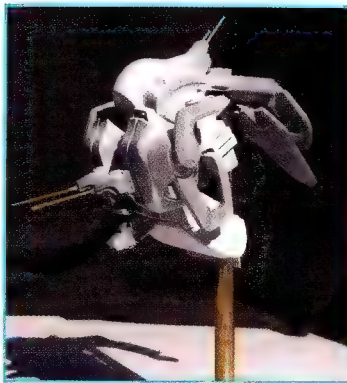


pretty good.

Paint & Decals:

Priming with Krylon Flat White tended to "craze" this plastic. After recovering from this minor disaster, I switched to Testors' Boyd White Primer. The vinyl parts were first shot with Microscale Flat followed by a good coat of Boyds. Shading was then done with the airbrush. The metallic surfaces are straight Model Master Metalizer Lacquer. The legs were masked off and painted with Tamiya Flat Red. After laying down the Tamiya, I notched the plain red up and down with Golden Airbrush Colors. Mixing in a couple of drops to the base red helped shadow and lighten the Tamiya. Finally, I misted on a little Tamiya Clear to help the transfers snuggle down.

Decals are not my specialty, so I got out a decal solvent solution and took my time. But the decals rebelled at any thought of a solvent so I ended up applying them with plain water. Frankly, I wasn't wild about the way the decals looked on the model. To me, they seemed washed out. I wanted a richer red for the crosses. Throwing caution to the wind, I painted over them with artist oil paints to bring out the red and then outlined each one with Payne's Gray. A (much) easier approach might be to outline the decals on the sheet with a pen and then copy the whole sheet onto transfer paper using a laser color copier.



Detailing & Base:

There are so many surfaces and angles on the Mirage that you can get lost in the detailing. When you start asking yourself, "Will this ever end?!" you know you're in trouble. I did as much detailing as possible with the airbrush, then relied on washes, dry brushing, Sakura 005 markers and some additional paint work with the artist oils to finally pull this flying monster together.

I wanted to do something eye-catching with the base and settled on this white with red cross motif. The pattern for the red cross was achieved by simply blowing the decal sheet up 400% on a copier - it's actually the decal that fits the shield. Then, I cut this out and tacked it to plain ol' styrene sheet with Photo Mount. You carefully cut this out and that's the plastic for the base. Pretty easy, really. The mounting rods are standard aluminum hobby shop stuff. Everything is held together with plenty of Pacer 'Z-Poxy and cyanoacrylate.

Conclusion:

Hats off to Wave for releasing this multimedia "adventure." It's probably not a good first time vinyl experience because of the backpack. Outside of that, it's an eye-catching model and worth the effort. Recommended.

Bill Mayo: E-mail: mayo.wh1@juno.com



RCHTA

Bringing the Industry Together Under One Roof

*Silvia DeRuvo outside the
Rosemont Center, Rosemont, IL
October 2000*

***“For Model
& Hobby
producers,
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is the place
to announce
your
product.”***

For the uninitiated, RCHTA is the springboard event for the model industry, much like the Toy Fair or the car shows held each year by major auto manufacturers, which give them the opportunity to unveil new product that they plan to make available to the consumer. Hobby companies look forward to RCHTA all year and start making plans for it the year prior. It is THE place to announce your product.

RCHTA is fun to walk through, check things out up close and personal and learn what's going on in the industry. This show can certainly be construed as one of the barometers that indicates the overall health of the hobby industry. As I reported in last year's article, models, by far, are a very small part of the hobby as a whole and that is clearly and accurately reflected in this show of shows. In some ways, models have even taken a bit more of a backseat in this year's show, as evidenced by fewer new model lines by the larger manufacturers: Racing Champions/Ertl, Revell-Monogram, Testors and Lindberg. Everyone seems a bit more cautious than last year. There were essentially no Sci-Fi models in sight from Racing Champions/Ertl, known for its Star Trek

and Star Wars line. This is usually cause for consternation among those who look forward to the possibility of being able to add more licensed Star Trek, Babylon 5 or Star Wars models to their collection. However, what I've usually noticed is that where the larger companies fail to come through, smaller, garage kit producers step in to fill the void. After all, this is how we've gotten many of the figure, Sci-Fi and fantasy kits that we've been able to purchase over the past few years.

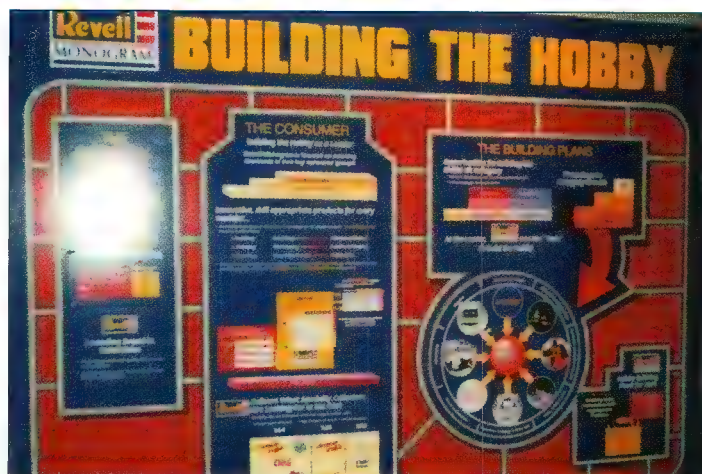
Lindberg is re-releasing a number of their dinosaur kits from a few years back in new packaging. Another car kit, which is something that is on my list to have one day, is the Diamond Duster, a 1:12 car from the future and comes complete with electronics.

Revell-Monogram is banking on a new series, called RAMS, to bring more kids into modeling. It's a great concept because all of the RAMS kits can be built and then actually played with by kids. I spoke briefly with Ed Sexton at R-M and he indicated that in all of their test markets, kids absolutely loved these new items, so they are most definitely looking forward to the growth potential through this venue.



Above: Chuck and David from Aves Studios; Silvia with Randy from Bare-Metal Foil.

Revell-Monogram has a number of other re-releases that were available at the time of the show or will be soon. They had just released the licensed figure of Mad Magazine's, Alfred E. Neuman, which is excellent. Other re-releases include a number of kits based on Tom Daniels' concept drawings that haven't seen the light of day in many years, including Hemi-Semi and a few others. It's nice to know that in the midst of all the industry upheaval, this company hasn't completely given up on figure and fantasy modelers. As with anything in the hobby/game industry, it's a gamble because there is never a guarantee of any kind of return. Certainly, the risk is less when a company takes an existing mold, cleans it up and pops out some kits, yet the risk is still present nevertheless.



Testors seems to be the only one continuing in the Sci-Fi realm with their line of alien-based dioramas and kits. They have not discontinued their Roswell Crash scene or the other alien-related kits. While their resin historical and fantasy figure kits are gone, they continue to produce resin vehicular kits based on fantasy art by such notables as Ed Newton, whom we profiled way back in issue #7, Thom Graham and others. These designs deserve to see the light of day. As with Revell's Tom Daniels re-releases, these are fun and exciting kits for the fantasy car buff. Unlike the Revell kits though, which will be released in injection molded plastic, these new ones from Testors will be produced in resin, making them a tad more expensive. Testors also continues their line of fine paint and airbrush materials for the modeler as well.



Hemi-Semi, upcoming from Revell and their plan to help build the hobby.

Playing Mantis/Polar Lights is the only kit producer continuing to produce figure and fantasy injection-molded kits. King Kong and Dick Tracy's Space Coupe are the newest and an all new Forbidden Planet space ship is on the horizon as well. An all black chrome version of Robby the Robot is also being produced.

• Continued Next Page •

Right: The Spectrum 2000 Quick Color Changer from Medea-Iwata Airbrush!





Bob Letterman's companies, **VLS/Warriors**, continue to produce high quality resin items for the modeler. Look for The Scouts, a fantasy kit consisting of a number of resin figures and diorama base. Various historical busts and full figures in large and small scales are also being produced.

Woodland Scenics continues to make diorama products accessible for the modeler who enjoys adding a scene to their models. Woodland's newest "kit" is very large scale and includes a ton of landscaping materials. A separate product, from their Learning Kit label, provides the modeler with the ability to create realistic roadways or paved areas for their models. We will put the product through its paces and let you know what we think in an upcoming issue. So be on the lookout for that!



In some cases, it can be disappointing to learn that something we hope may be unveiled at RCHTA isn't, and at other times, it's the excitement of knowing that some model we've been yearning for will finally debut.

For the most part, all of the products that are showcased eventually do make their way to store shelves; however, in rare instances certain products fail to see the light of day. Normally, however, there is plenty to feast the eyes on and the best thing about RCHTA is that it's all under one roof!

The Donald E. Stephens Center (named after the current mayor of Rosemont and formally known as the Rosemont Center) has been the host of RCHTA for quite some time and is probably the perfect venue. RCHTA takes place roughly in the middle of the country, a stone's throw from O'Hare International Airport. The facility is big enough to house nine football fields (bring your walking shoes!) and there is plenty of space for companies to spread out and strut their stuff. Whether it's radio control, trains, plastic kits or an after-market item, what you see on these pages is what you can hope to see in hobby shops and stores this year.



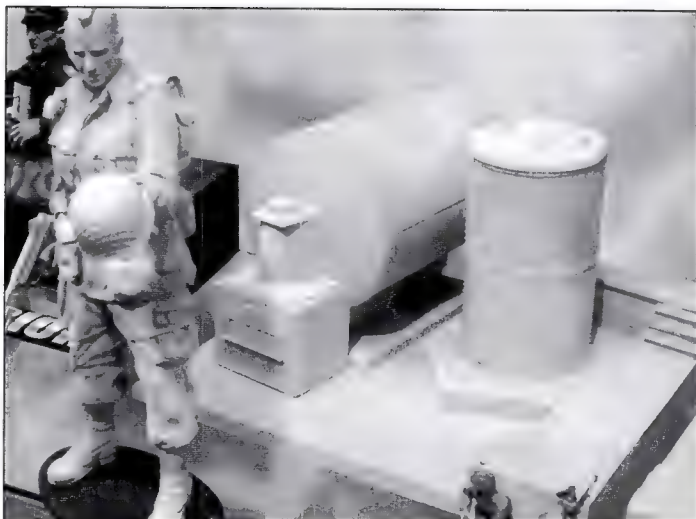
What's the overall health of the hobby industry? Essentially, that depends upon your individual perspective; what you would like to see being produced. You might come away with some measure of disappointment or, conversely, your interest might be piqued by what you are able to take in at the show. With RCHTA, there's a bit of something for everyone. Enjoy the photo collage on these pages and the anticipation of knowing what we can expect in 2001.



Having said all that, you just can't go to Chicago and the RCHTA show without taking in some of the sights and sounds of the surrounding areas!

Fortunately, for us, there is plenty to do while in Illinois. We attended RCHTA all day Thursday and part of Friday to

From Top: Matt Hiebert of Woodland Scenics. Angie from Polar Lights with new products they will be debuting this year.



Upcoming product from the VLS/Warriors and Lindberg lines debuted at the show.

renew acquaintances, check things out and learn what to expect from the industry.

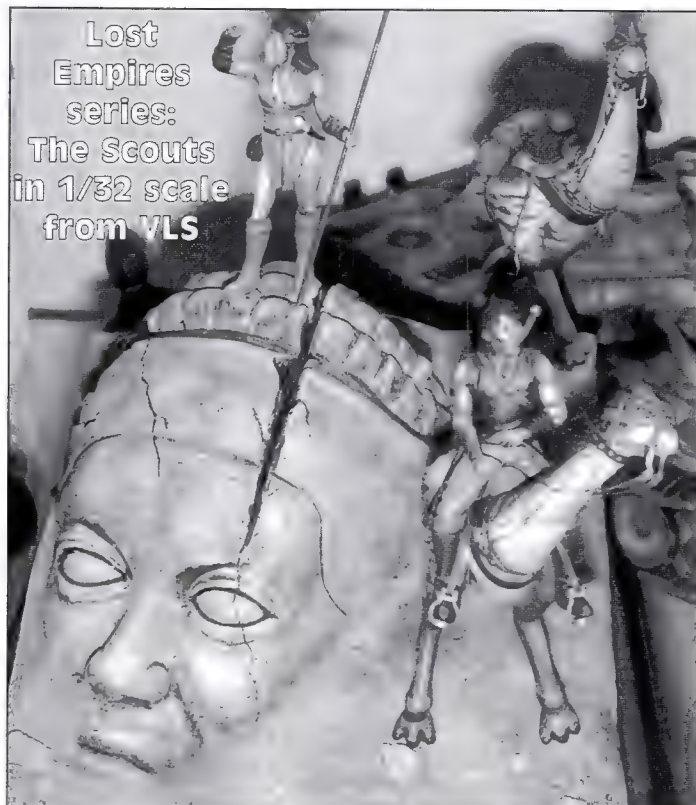
Friday afternoon found us following Jim Meinhardt back to **Kalmbach Publishing Co.**, headquarters in Waukesha, WI about an hour and a half north, where we had the distinct privilege of meeting some of the folks who participate in bringing you Kalmbach publications like *FineScale Modeler*. What astounded both Silvia and I was the fact that this huge hobby publications company began with one man, A. C. Kalmbach and one publication called, *Model Railroader* during the depression in 1934! Over 60 years later, that publication still exists with a circulation of over 200,000.

During our trip, we learned a great deal about the company. We also enjoyed chatting with Bill, one of the two, full time, in-house photographers at Kalmbach, and Tonya, a graphic designer, whose job it is to layout and design roughly 12 to 16 articles per month for three to four publications owned and published by Kalmbach. Talking shop was enjoyable and eye-opening. We also appreciated the privilege of meeting the president of Kalmbach, Mr. Gerald B. Boettcher. We're glad that Jim Meinhardt was able to take time out to give us the grand tour and we thank him for that.

On Saturday, we attended the MMSI, a chapter of historical miniaturists, which includes Shep Paine among other notables. This show, very much like SCAHMS on the West Coast, hosts an exhibition that is equally as impressive. Many of the entries were absolutely phenomenal. It's always good to attend these shows and find out what's happening in the world of historical/military miniatures and it's also great to see many of the faces that we've come to know and appreciate since we began attending SCHAMS many years ago. Hey, we even ran into Larry Burbridge and Jimmy Flintstone who were vendors at the show!

Sightseeing is another reason to attend this show. My wife has relatives in the Milwaukee area and so it was off to see

• Continued Next Page •





Kalmbach Publishing Headquarters



Staff Photographer, William Zuback



them on Friday evening for an honest-to-goodness fish fry at a local restaurant known for its selection. After that, of course, it was down the road to grab a frozen custard! Oh yeah! Can't be beat! Saturday evening found us heading back to attend the fall dance of the Donauswabern (Germans who lived on the Danube River). We enjoyed a festive atmosphere, made up of authentic German food, band and dancing. Quite a party! Don't forget your lederhosen!

All in all, there were quite a few reasons for us to head to Chicago: RCHTA, Kalmbach, relatives, frozen custard, German food, dancing and just an enjoyable time! We are very glad we were able to attend and we hope you enjoy our report of what's to come in 2001.



Above: Silvia DeRuvo, Marketing Mgr., Jim Meinhardt and Fred DeRuvo in front of the Kalmbach display at RCHTA.

Right: The original press used by A.C. Kalmbach to print his first publication and many thereafter.

Left: Fred DeRuvo talking shop with in-house Graphic Artist, Tonya Benson





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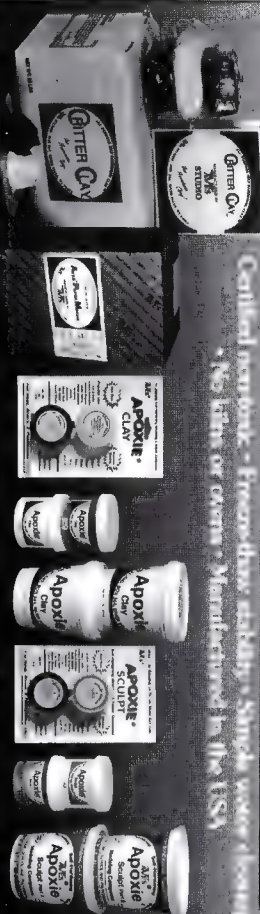
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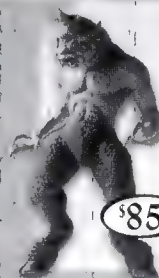
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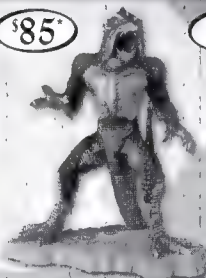
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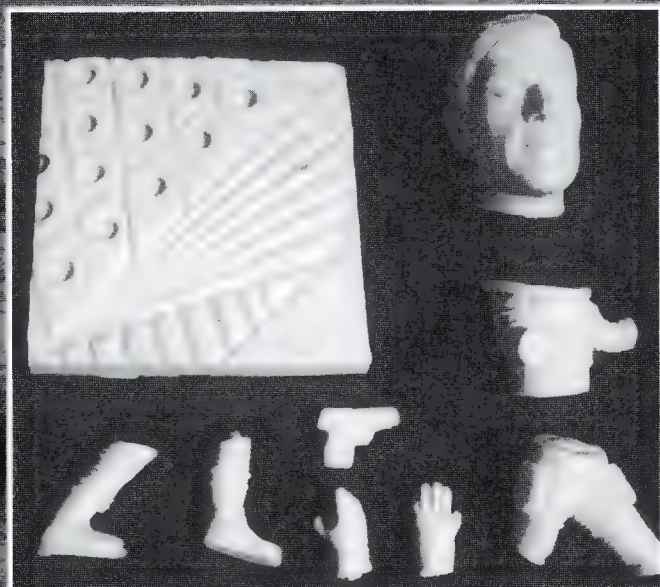
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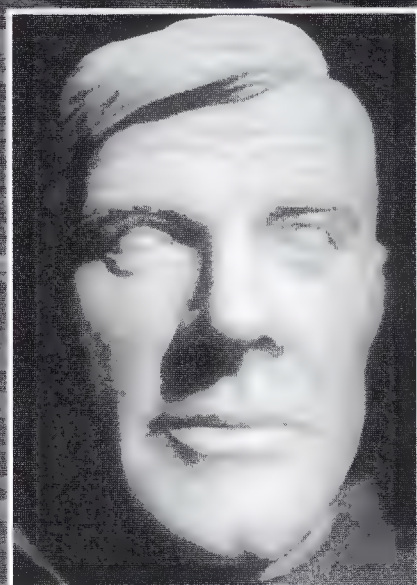
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ACROSS the POND

with Andrew "Mad Dog" Hall



Bond, James Bond...



Having been under a rock for a few months (that's "rock" as in hard grey stone type thing as opposed to "The Rock" as in hard flesh coloured WWF wrestler), I thought I would emerge from my chrysalis like a multi-hued butterfly to once again pass onto the masses news of what's been "going down" in the kit world on this side of the Pond. That's Europe, for the uninitiated.

The short answer is, "Not a lot." The market here is undergoing a huge change and in high powered businessman terms, it's "downsizing." This could turn out to be a very good thing in the long term in that the "let's make some money while we can" cowboys have, or are vanishing. So, whilst new kits and producers are thin on the ground, those that are still around do appear to be in it for the hobby, which is no bad thing. Hence a news and stuff article will help to bring you dudes and dudettes up-to-date, just a little bit.

Harlequin Miniatures, those lovely people who brought us fully licensed 25mm Dr. Who and Babylon 5 figures has been sold to an outfit called Icon Miniatures. The real bad, sad news is that both lines of figures have been discontinued and I just don't see anyone purchasing these licenses in the near future. In short, if you see any of these lines and want them, snap them up whilst you still can. Harlequin also produced an extensive range of white metal "Lord of the Rings" role playing/war game figures (not affiliated to the new, much anticipated movie) and general fantasy armies, but as yet, I do not know if Icon plans on producing these. That said, they would be out of their trees not to continue with these and I am sure this is why Icon has bought Harlequin. Time will tell.

If you are into a little Bond and I do mean "little," then newcomers, Movie World Models, could have something to interest you. Run by Dave Hanlon, MWM has released two Bond-related kits, both deforms or more like caricatures. Both are approximately seven inches tall and both sell for around £30.00. Roger Moore as Bond from the 007 space epic (epic!), Moonraker. The kit comes in nine tan resin parts with the biggest being the base, which I think is supposed to represent part of the space station's floor. The space-suited figure has been sculpted by Paul Fay whom many long-term readers of *Modeler's Resource* will no doubt be aware of, is one of the best sculptors at capturing a likeness in the British Isles. I cannot sing Paul's praises high enough. He has done a tremendous job on the figure and, more importantly, the face, so I have to wonder if he is responsible for the base, which looks like it has been rushed.

The second figure is that of Christopher Lee as old three nips himself, "Scaramanga" aka The Man with The Golden Gun. Out of the two kits, this is the one to stick on your "wants" list. Again, it's all credit to Paul Fay's likeness which is superb, but what really finishes this off is that the base has been sculpted to represent the assassin's lair where he practices his techniques. You know, the spot where 007 is hunted at the end of the movie. The only thing I will add is either a small dwarf or goblin dressed in a suit to portray Scaramanga's diminutive assistant. Interested? If so, send an International Reply Coupon (from your local Post Office) and nice letter to the following address, but please remember to mention where you saw it, to: **Movie World Models, 36 Ashgrove Ave, Coney Hill, Gloucester, GL4 4NF England.**

Talking about Bond, we move on, almost as if this article is planned, to another newcomer who is Universal Exports, run by Adrian Cowdry. This appears to be a very promising looking producer now based at Morden in Surrey (upper London). To date, they have released five 1:6 scale figures which I hope to feature in future ATPs. Those available are John Wayne, Gert Frobe as supervillain, Auric Goldfinger, Harold Sakata as the man with the killer hat, Oddjob, a Roman Arena Champion (guess who?) and Bond number two, George Lazenby, which you may have seen in a previous MR, so let's take a look at the matter.

George Lazenby has been thought of by many as the forgotten Bond, starring in only one outing which was "On Her Majesty's Secret Service" in 1969. OHMSS costarred Diana Rigg, hot off her success in the TV show - and now huge cult classic - The Avengers. Telly Savalas also starred as the evil mastermind with the cunning plan, plus we have the obligatory sidekick, the dastardly hench woman, Irma Brunt. What made this Bond movie different is that Bond marries the leading lady only to have her shot and killed by Brunt at the end of the film. Boooo, hisss, etc. Let's be right dear readers, no way could that international man of action remain hitched. Bond just would not be Bond without all of those helpless females for him to...save.

The kit comes in tan resin and, as stated, is 1:6 scale. George has seven parts which are: Legs to belt (very well cast), Torso (so that the jacket covers his bum; very well sculpted and gives a jolly good sense of movement); Right arm (which fits the torso quite well); Left arm (again, quite a clean fit to the body); Right gun hand (the detail is OK. You may wish to make a shirt cuff from plasticard to hide the join), Head "A" (a very good likeness to George which fits snugly into the shirt collar); Head "B" (wearing the famous Trilby hat. Now, although correct for the figure, I feel this head is a little fatter than needed so I suggest you consign this head to the spares box. You just never know).

Construction wise, we are not talking anything out of the ordinary. Clean, file, undercoat and test fit, etc. I will not attempt to insult your intelligence, so suffice it to say that you should not have any problems. The same goes for painting, really. George is wearing a black suit with a white shirt so guess which colours to choose? No prizes.

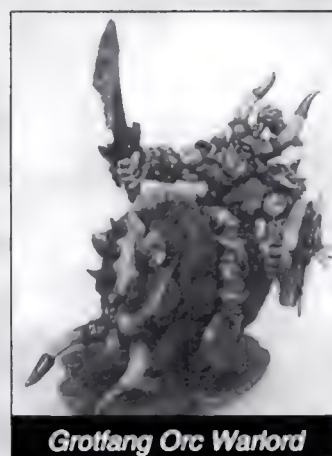
Overall, this figure is a Bond fan's dream and I am sure the first of Lazenby to be produced. Priced at the £50.00 mark, as are the others from Universal Exports, I don't think most GK builders will complain with that and if you are interested, then drop a line to: Universal Exports, 238 Lynmouth Ave, Morden, Surrey, SM4 4RS, England.

Finally, onto the biggest producer of fantasy items in the UK, Games Workshop. Under their banner, Forge World, they have finally started to produce larger scale figures from their fantasy and Sci-Fi world. Castings are fantastic, the best I have seen...ever! Their busts tend to be four inches tall and sell for about £25.00/£30.00, while their range of figures stand four to six inches high, £30.00/£35.00 with a larger range priced...wait for it...at £150.00. Okay, so the latter are darn expensive, but the busts and smaller figures are very affordable. As stated, the castings and detail are fantastic and well worth a look. You should be able to have a gleg on forgeworld@games-workshop.co.uk. More details will follow within this very organ. Priced right, Games Workshop could well be the saviours of the UK kit market.

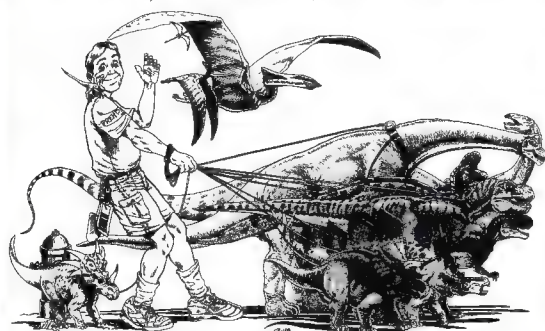
Okay, that's about it except a few of you may be wondering just who the heck I am? Well, I am the editor and founder of the Film & TV Model Club and we produce our own club magazine called, DRONE, here in England. We have passed issue 50 and have our own web site which is run by one of our members, Dave Foster, so if you want to check us out, head to: <http://www.dronemagftvmc.com>

If you are a European kit producer and want to get noticed with the discerning kit buyer, you can contact me at the address below.

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STEGOSAURUS UNGALATUS

22"



I have always liked animals. The weirder they are, the more interesting I found them, especially birds and reptiles. The colors and plumes are so wild and I figured dinosaurs probably looked the same. It made for a creative blend of science and imagination. These animals fascinate me. It is a lot of fun trying to bring one of these animals back to life and also a lot of brain work, "was it like this or like that?" Every aspect of the animal makes you think. There are so many ways to do things, unlike animals today, where everything is right in front of you and where's the fun in that?

What's the best thing about sculpting dinosaurs?

Using my imagination, and trying to apply aspects of today's animals into them. It never ends; tomato, tom-a-to, potato, po-ta-to, which way was it? The cool thing is that if you use the known information on the prehistoric animal and the science of anatomy, no one can disprove any of the "chrome" you put on the animal, like bright colors or a feather crest or even crazy things like high back scutes or chicken combs. Imagine it, a 40 foot T-rex with a big fleshy turkey thing hanging off the ridges of its snout. People usually don't go for that stuff but you never know, reality is truly stranger than fiction and almost anything is possible.

And the Worst?

There's little money in it. You do it because you love it, that's it.

I remember when you first contacted me. How long have you been sculpting?

I started right before the first JURASSIC PARK came out, about 7 or so years, I think.

Around 1993 then, why did you choose Dimetrodon and Edaphosaurus as your first sculptures?

I wanted to do the weirdest animal I could find and what's stranger than an animal with a 4 foot spiny sail sticking out of its back. The American Museum of Natural History in NY where I live has a lot of the animals I have based my sculptures on. Those two just stuck out for me. When I realized they were from the same period, then it was a must; a perfect combo piece. The mounts of the two at the museum are incredible.

You seem to like heavier-looking dinosaurs.

Yeah, I do tend to make my dinos on the thick side. That's just how I see them. I mean, these were real animals and a nice healthy animal would have some meat on its bones and a thick tail to balance the thing out. The animal needs to be about 50/50 or 60/40 (animal to tail ratio). It needs as much weight in back of its legs as in front. I think too many artists make these animals too thin. Many of them sculpted as just skin over bone. Dinosaurs were not fish, they were land animals with insides full of expanding lungs and organs, and bellies full of meat and vegetation pushing their rib cages out, with muscles in-between ribs and shoulder blades. Physically, those thinly depicted animals wouldn't work.

I also make my tails longer than most. Artists aren't looking at these animals right. For example, look at the new T-rex mount at the AMNH in NY. The tail on that thing goes on forever. That isn't the look of the tail on the T-rex in Jurassic Park and the look most dinos are given today. Look at modern lizards. Their tails are more than 2/3rds of their body length. The reason for that is weight and balance. The same would go for dinosaurs, especially theropods. Their legs are pivot points. They need that 50/50 ratio to be successful and survive or they would fall on their face. Take my crouching T-rex sculpture. With the tail I put on him, you put him down and he's perfectly balanced. He doesn't fall forward like almost every other T-rex sculpture out there. He doesn't even need mounting pins, he's so balanced, I know that some dinos are more bird than lizard, but they still are holding onto reptilian qualities, their tail. Birds don't have tails, they have feathers. Besides, most flightless birds pretty much lost their tail altogether. Their center of gravity is different. Some of the smaller dinos might have been thin and light, but, for the most part, I believe large dinos were thick. Dinosaurs evolved from alligator and crocodile-like animals and look how thick and powerful those 20-footers are; they're huge.

You sculpt in a fairly large scale. Why?

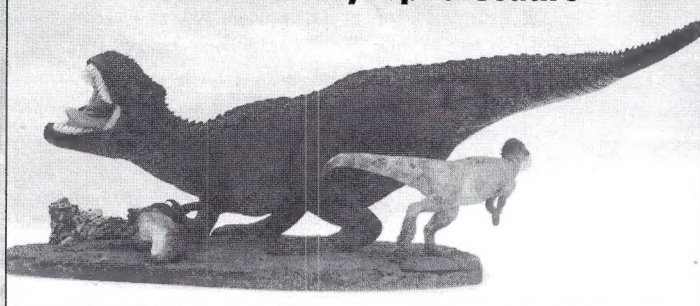
I started out small, but after one or two pieces I felt like I was making toys. I wanted to make ART, real sculpture, not toys and models. So I increased my sculpture size by 5%. What a difference it makes. On the one hand it's so much easier, I mean the detail you can get with larger stuff is incredible, but it also makes for more work. You can't get away with cutting corners. You can't just give your piece a leathery skin look. It's just too cheesy. I never have anyway, even on my smaller stuff. Well not really small, I always made my 1/20th stuff a little big anyway. They represent the big bulls or old granddads in 1/20 scale so they fit well as 1/15 juveniles or sub-adults, the scale I like to work in now. Take my Diplodocus. It was supposed to be a 1/20th piece, but it came out a little large. In length he would actually be a Seismosaurus, he's so huge. Ask one of the four people who has one. But he works out nice as a 1/15 Diplodocus.

That's the only bad thing about working larger; people don't buy big. They don't have the room, or the money. The bigger it is, the more material you need to mold it and cast it, making it more expensive, and don't forget the shipping, OUCH! My stuff is for the serious collector, and I am lucky that I have 3 or 4 die hard clients who love my stuff and keep me alive, barely. They tell me my stuff is the best out there. I don't know about that, but they mostly appreciate my scale work on the skin. I easily put over 5,000 scales on each piece, and they appreciate it. I thank them for their patience and loyalty.

How do you choose what dinosaur to do?

I'm not sure. I'm always changing my mind on what dino to do next. I have so many that I want to do. It's hard to decide. To solve that, I usually have about 4 or 5 sculptures going at once. I tend to loose steam when I get to the detailing part; all those scales, ooh all those scales. The fun's gone when I get there. That's why I have the other sculptures standing by in various levels of completion. It keeps me going switching back and forth. It also gives me a chance to step back and look with a different perspective. It really prevents dino burnout and my rushing just to get it done to start something new. I can start an armature, bulk the thing out, add its muscles and wrinkles and a face within a couple of days, basically it could be done under a week if I leathered him out. But dinos didn't have leathery skin. They had scales, lots and lots

T-rex w/Pachycephalosaurs



and lots of scales. That's the point where I sometimes have to put it down and walk away, or I'd go nuts.

How do you do your research?

As with most other things, the research starts by going to the source. I usually try to start with a good skeleton, if I can find one. Sometimes I find more than one and that's when the headaches start. Most of the time they're different. Right now I'm doing an Euoplocephalus. I went on line because they don't have a mount here in NY. I found 3 different mounts. Each is different in a lot of ways. Which one is right? Like I said before, tomato, to-ma-to, that's when you have to go to animals of today and compare. I usually end up blending a lot of what I find to make the animal look as if it was a living, breathing creature. I also go to books, dinosaur books with a good scientific foundation. I have close to 30 books on dinos, most of which are useless because most of the art work portrayed in them is based upon other dinosaur books that weren't done correctly to begin with. You need to study the scientific papers written on the subject that you are studying. Also you go to the people in the field that you respect the most. I try to stay away from the scientists who are too stiff to imagine these animals as wild as they could be. I have different people for different steps of the construction. I talk to people at the Black Hills Institute and to Tracy Ford for some of my skeletal work; I like his eye. Paleontologists Phil Currie, Paul Sereno and Dale Russell are excellent for their down-to-earth view on the living, fleshed out animal and Robert Bakker helps me give the animal the over the edge something or other to make the dinosaur a DINOSAUR!! That animal in our imagination that's larger than life! Throw it all in a blender and puree on high for awhile and when it's done, you've got a dinosaur, I hope.

Can a sculptor make a decent living making dinosaur models?

NO! I sometimes don't even make enough to get by. But I do get to do what I want when I want. I sit here in my little mud hut and I do what makes me happy, waiting for that one deal that will make things easy for a while, and it comes, few and far between right now, but I'm still new to the business. My name still has to get out there, and it will. Like anything in life, anything worth having isn't easy. You have to pay your dues, and I'm paying, boy, am I paying! Like GOD All Mighty said, you must work to eat. Maybe I need to work harder. Like I said before, sometimes I lose steam when I'm close to finishing something. I don't know, it's kind of sad when you're done with a piece and say goodbye to it.

What other subject matter have you sculpted?

Not much, a couple of dragons, some marine life, whales and such and some angels. I also got a chance to sculpt for the movie "Dogma."

Tell us about "Dogma."

There really isn't much to say. A friend of mine, Tom, got this gig sculpting prosthetics and doing makeup on the set when the owner of the studio was looking for help on the costume for the "poop" demon. If you didn't see the movie, don't ask. Anyway, Tom did some work for me a little before that and told him about this 12 foot T-rex I had sculpted for another company. He was looking for people who had done large sculpture before, because the guy going into this suit was about 6 1/2 feet tall and quite large. We used a couple of hundred pounds of clay on this thing. It was a lot of fun. I worked on it with another fellow, Sandy, from LA. He was flown out because he had done suit work before. I learned a lot on that gig. I would have liked to have met Kevin Smith, the director, but my job was finished and I was out of there before he visited the shop.

Your 15 minutes of fame! What other paleo-artists do you like out there?

I like a bunch of them. Different artists for different categories of art. For pen and ink or charcoal I like Doug Henderson and John Sibbick. Nobody does light and shadow like Doug and I think Sibbick has the best overall "eye" of any artist out there. I try to make my work reflect his style the most. His dinosaurs are real animals. Even though he doesn't do the scale thing very much, his skin is still highly detailed and shows the animal realistically. For paintings I like Michael Skrepnick, Sibbick of course, John Gurche; his stuff is real clean and James Gurney (Dinotopia) for bringing us a world that all dino freaks wish was possible. I like the way his animals have a little bit of fantasy to them but are real enough to believe. I can't wait for the Dinotopia movie to come out. It will probably blow away any Jurassic Park movie they could come up with. Come on, dinosaurs and people living together and the people aren't being chased or eaten. It should make for great



Edaphosaurus

fun. I would have given anything to have worked on that movie. Also William Stout. I like the way he incorporates what I was saying before about things you can't disprove, like peeling skin, feathers, fleshy skin displays and other fanciful tidbits. I would like to sculpt more like that but I'm afraid it wouldn't sell. In sculpture I like Mike Tric and Tony McVey of course. They're the reason I got into this.

I loved what they did so much but couldn't afford it, so I started myself. But my favorite sculptor or should I say sculptors, are the husband and wife team of Steven and Sylvia Czerkas. Their stuff is the best, and to top it off, it's all life-size. What a life this guy leads. He builds life size dinosaurs and shares it with the woman he loves, what could be better? In film I would have to say Ray Harryhausen. He started it all for this generation. There were a few before him like in the original LOST WORLD and KING KONG but those dinos are just so bad, great for the time and classics forever but still bad. Then came Ray and things took off. One million years BC, Valley of Gwangi, that's when dinosaurs became dinosaurs. He even made his allosaurs run with their tail off the ground. Ahead of his time, he was. I was fortunate to meet him a couple of years back. He was judging a sculpture contest in Boston and presented me an award for best of show and peoples choice for my brown forest dragon. That's where I ran into the guys from Saurian Studios and the Dinosaur Studio before they went their separate ways. They had a table full of dinosaurs. I was blown away. We talked, they told me how much they liked my work and would put me in there catalog if I did a real prehistoric animal. That's how I started with dinos. That's when I decided to do the Dimetrodon.

What do you think of the work being done today, overall?

I like it. So many artist are coming out of the wood work. A lot of it is due to you Mike and Prehistoric Times magazine. It's giving avenues to us dreamers that were never available before. Heck, that's where I basically got my start in the dino world. A lot of us new paleo-artist have you to thank for giving us the space to show our dreams. There are so many good artists out there right now, the market is starting to get flooded. The realism of these animals is getting better every day. And for right now that's all we have. Until they can actually clone a dinosaur and bring them back to life, we artists are the link to the past. Every body has his or her unique idea and vision of how these animals looked, some good, some not so good and a few great and ground breaking. But like I said before, reality is truly stranger then fiction. Look at a platypus. It has the face of a duck, the body of a beaver and it lays eggs. Or a flamingo, a 5-foot tall bird, Pink or salmon colored, bright orange legs, eats with its head upside down under the water and it flies. Do you think if a scientist found that skeleton he would be able to bring that bird back to life like that? I don't think so.

What can we expect to see in the future from Keith Strasser?

I am going to continue to put out some more dinosaur sculpture for now. I have a bunch of pieces in the works and would like to finish them up. There are so many dinos I would like to do but so little time. I will need to concentrate on getting about a 1/2 dozen more before 2002. I have also started a book on these amazing animals. It probably won't be the most scientifically accurate book on dinosaurs but it will have some new looks on some old classics and full of CGI illustrations. I have about 20 to 30 illustrations done on the computer already and interest from a publisher to use some of my pictures in another book series on dinosaurs. And then I hope to start my 3-D animation company. I want to bring my sculptures to life, make them living, breathing, moving animals; well, at least on the computer screen. After seeing WALKING WITH DINOSAURS and the making of it, I thought, hey I do all that already, I just don't have the computer to handle the animation yet. I would also like to do some more museum work and try to get on some projects that involve

• Concluded Next Page •

some life size dinosaurs. My hope is to some day do a life size Acrocanthosaurus or Spinosaurus. Those are my favorite dinosaurs. Its just amazing to me that these animals were on the range of forty feet or more and had those tall neural spines two to six feet sticking out of their backs. Its just incredible.

Thanks Keith!

Keith Strasser, sculptor/owner of Planet Earth Sculpture sent three of his latest dinosaur resin models along for my review. His big, new 22" long Stegosaurus ungalatus is a fine example of this favorite of the Jurassic dinosaurs. The ungalatus species had eight spikes on its tail instead of four. Keith poses his one piece (except individual tail spikes) casting of Stego lumbering along on a large rocky base (provided). As with all of Keith's sculptures, glass taxidermy eyes are included in the price. The spikes and huge plates on its back are highly detailed showing them very much as they look in fossilized form today; splitting and growing layer upon layer. The plates are set in two alternating lines. The legs are set pretty much right underneath the animal with some bent elbows aiming toward the back. Keith's trademark "scales" are aplenty with minute versions on the head growing larger to scute size upon the rib cage. Keith likes a plump dinosaur and his Stego was obviously a well fed individual in life. Nonetheless, ribs and muscle tones are clearly depicted. The Stego kit is \$275.00 or Keith will build and paint it for \$795.00. All Keith's prices include base and shipping. A very fine sculpture, but I like his Acrocanthosaurus even better.

Acrocanthosaurus is the ridge-backed carnosaur known from Texas and elsewhere that seems to be getting a lot of attention lately. Keith especially likes sail-backed or high ridge-backed prehistoric animals and he obviously enjoyed creating this ridge-back. The huge 33" long resin sculpture is mostly in one piece but the head is a separate three parts and the arms too need to be attached. Glass eyes and a large rocky base is included in the price. Keith pins the one foot to a hole in the base for a good, safe attachment. This is certainly necessary in this scale.

Keith gives his Acrocanthosaurus the look that I like, a very scientifically accurate, detailed and lifelike appearance. I too like this animal, and have studied it and drawn it. Acro had some very interesting head ornamentation that Keith has recreated flawlessly and an uneven ridged-back that looks very much like what I would expect to see in nature. Skin detail? Fuhgeddaboutit! The incredible amount of scales on this large body is mind-boggling. How does Keith keep his sanity? Every little wrinkle, rough scute, bone and muscle is suggested, and all to the right size and scale. Wrinkled flesh and reptilian-like scales are especially well accomplished on the dinosaur's underside. This dinosaur looks like it would hurt to touch him. The feet have a powerful and massive look to them as he runs along. I think you can see how well this model looks in Keith's photo (some of his computer work). This huge kit is \$445.00 or completely built and painted by Keith for \$895.00.

The third model is Carnotaurus, another carnosaur that has become very

popular among dinosaur fans in the past few years. This South American predator had stubby little arms, and two odd horns atop its blunt-shaped head. The resin kit comes with the main body piece, separate upper teeth and two versions of the lower jaw, (you have the option of open or closed mouth, but who wants a closed mouth?) and two arms. A very clever and detailed rocky base is included as well as two glass taxidermy eyes. For Keith Strasser, this is a small kit, about 20" long. He consequently really went to town creating small and convincing skin detail. The Carnotaurus fossil was so well preserved, we even know what some of the skin detail on the head looked like.

Keith portrays that well and does an especially good job on Carno's underbelly. I am most impressed with this skin detail. I see a real improvement in Keith's work that has always been excellent to begin with. Carnotaurus is portrayed running at a fast clip with one foot on the ground and another high in the air. A sharp-scuted back rounds out this truly excellent new offering from Keith. Ask Keith, but kit price is about \$150.

Make checks to: Keith Strasser, 35 Middle Island Rd. Middle Island, NY, 11953 (631) 345-6825 dinoart1@aol.com www.dinosculpture.com.

Acrocanthosaurus

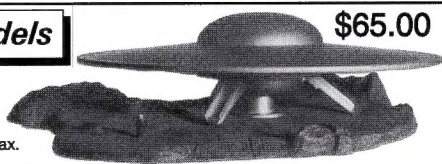


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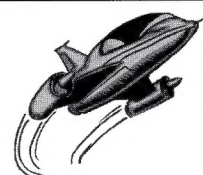
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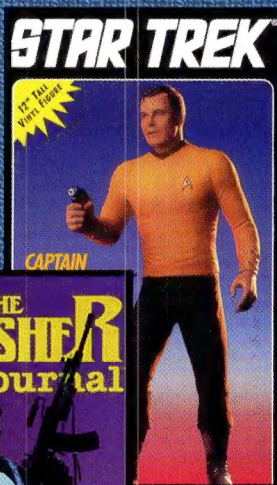
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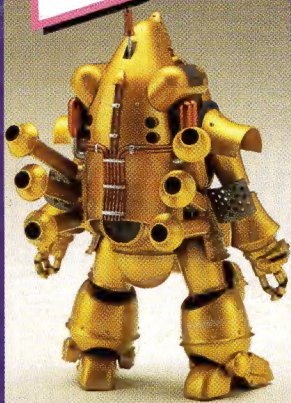
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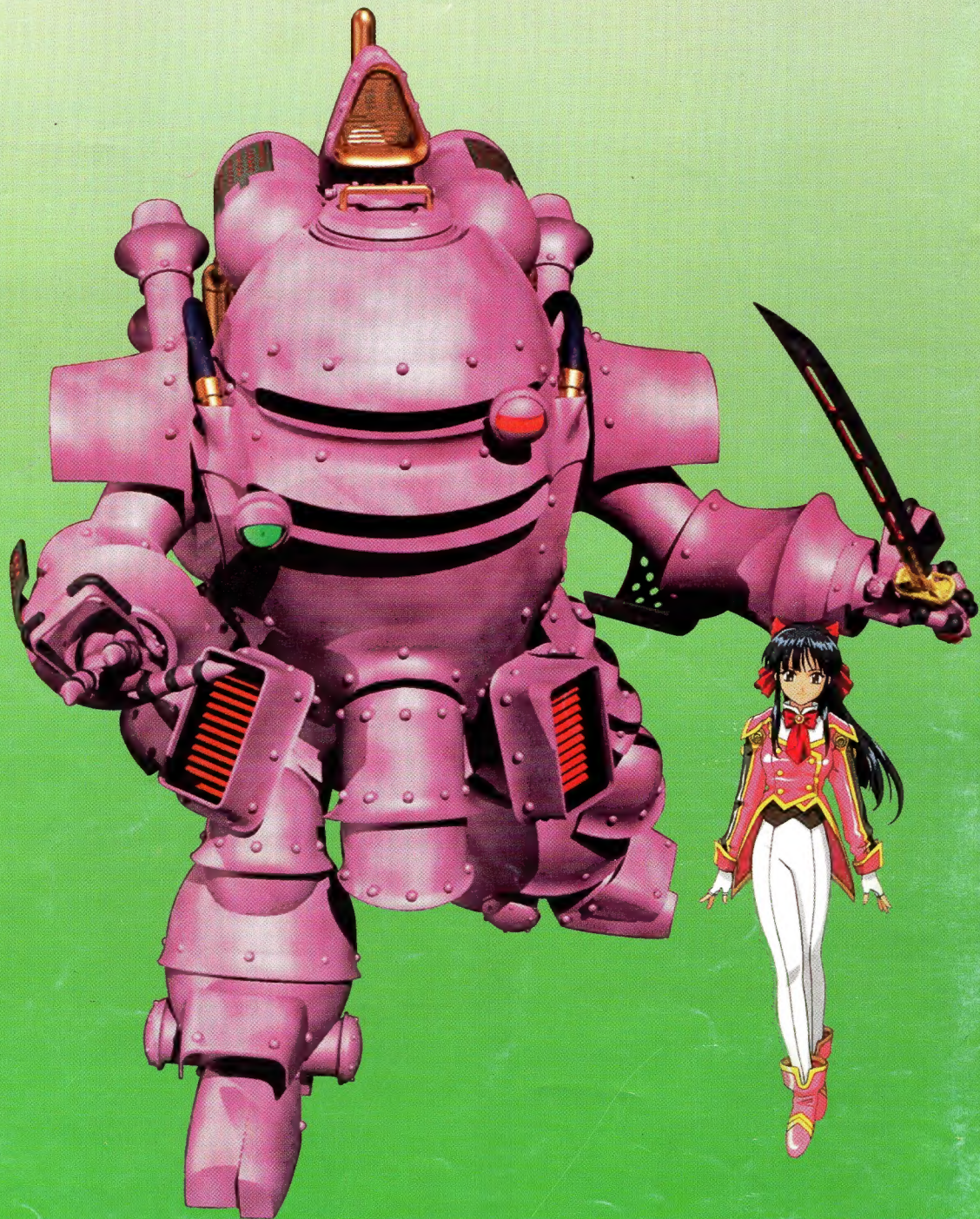
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